DISCOURSES
AND
ESSAYS
ON
Several Subjects,

Relating chiefly to the Controverſies of theſe Times;

Eſpecially with the

SOCINIANS,
DEISTS,
ENTHUSIASTS, and
SCEPTICKS.

By *JA. BUERDSELL*, M.A. Fellow of *Braſe-noſe* College. *Oxon.*

OXFORD,
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To the Right Reverend Father in God,

WILLIAM,

Lord Bishop of *Worcester*,

Lord Almoner to the KING.

My Lord,

NEver any Pieces more wanted *so great a Name, as your Lordships, to cover their faults, if the* Composition *of them is survey'd, nor more* deserv'd *it, if the* Nobility *of their Subjects is consider'd, than these* Essays, *which now beg your Lordships Protection. If the* Management *of them resembled the* Matter *they are employ'd about, they might appeal to your Lordships Judgment, as a* Critick, *not fly to your Goodness, as a* Patron. *But as I am conscious of the num-*

berless defects of these Discourses, *so am I equally sensible that your Lordships Writings and Worth have gain'd you such a settled Esteem amongst all Persons, whose Esteem is valuable, that if it is possible to guard an ill Writer from his just Doom, your Lordships* Character *may ensure him. And certainly if any faulty Performances carry their excuses along with them, these may lay claim to Pardon, since they are wholly design'd to promote* Truth, Virtue, *and* Piety, *how defective soever they are on other regards. Even the Imperfections of them may perhaps be useful, as Nature serves her self of the most contemptible* Means *to bring about wonderful* Ends; *for by not appearing such, as so good Themes would suggest to Persons of excellent*

Parts,

Parts, they may provoke them to draw their more artful Pens in so just a Cause, and to substitute better Discourses *in their places, and to rescue these illustrious Subjects from so rude Hands as mine, by employing their successful Wits in defending them. It will be Felicity enough for me, if I can so far contribute towards producing a good Writer, as to be his Foyl, and to shew that in others, which I cannot make my self.*

I hope these Exercitations will not be look'd on as quite useless, tho' something of the same kind with most of them, has advantageously appear'd in several Languages. For some of the Arguments, I think, are not absolutely old, and tho' their Matter *is sometimes so, yet the* Form *or Dress is always new.*

It may often be as hard to trace from whence the Materials were taken, as in a Wine-Vessel, to shew from what Grape each drop of Wine was press'd.

In one or two of these Discourses *I have had Authors of note in foreign Languages in my view, which are so well known, that it is superfluous to name them. This, I fancy, needs no Apology, since a Critick, as excellent, as severe, has made it allowable above a thousand Years ago, where he affirms, That the using the Works of other Learn'd Men for our Patterns, and to govern our Inventions by,* * is no more stealth, than one's taking the Manners, the Pictures, or any other Pieces of

* Ἔστι δ' οὐ κλοπὴ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀπὸ καλῶν ἠθῶν ἢ πλασμάτων ἀποτύπωσις. Longin. περὶ ὕψους *Sect.* 11. *p.* 57. *Edit.* Langbaine.

Work

Work done by another, for our Models to copy after.

If the Opinions which I oppoſe, are rather thoſe of ancient, than modern Writers, it is becauſe I look upon thoſe *to have greater ſtrength than* theſe, *and in divers places the* latter *to have only tranſcrib'd the* former; *tho' neither are our modern Writers paſt by without conſideration.*

If I differ from great Men in ſome Punctilio's, I believe it is generally where I can produce others of equal remark, of my Sentiments; and I deſire to expreſs my Diſſent with all imaginable deference and regard, and to pay the utmoſt Honour to thoſe admirable Perſonages, whom I am ſo bold as to contradict. Notwithſtanding which I am very willing to ſubmit all

to

to riper Judgments, declaring that I make theſe Attempts *publick, more with a* deſire *to invite others to inform me, than with the* preſumption *of informing others. If your Lordſhip had ſeen theſe ſmall Tracts before they went to the Preſs, as you have done ſince they came from it, when you were pleas'd to encourage me to addreſs them to your Lordſhip, they might have come abroad much more correct, more worthy your Lordſhip's Patronage. As to the time of giving theſe* Eſſays *light, it cannot be ill choſen, when our Eſtabliſhed Religion is attack'd by* Scepticks, Deiſts, *and others of that Rank: and therefore, as in a publick Invaſion, every perſon is commiſſioned to put himſelf into a poſture of Defenſe; and if the dumb*

Lydian

Lydian *Prince had his Tongue loos'd by the violent Passion and Effort to save his Royal* Father, *insomuch that he could utter an apt and significant Reprimand against the Assassin, if we believe an* * Historian *who sometimes relates things incredible; so 'tis no time to be silent when our common* Mother, *the* Orthodox *and* Catholick Church, *is in every part assaulted by prophane and irreligious Pens? The* Lydian's *speaking indeed preluded to the ruin of his Father's Grandeur, and one of the most flourishing Monarchies in* Asia. *But our* Church, *by the Divine Blessing, needs not to fear any thing, from any* Omen, *while such as your Lordship preside over* her.

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* Ἄνθρωπε, μὴ κτεῖνε Κροῖσον. Herod. *in* Clio. *p.* 36. *Sect.* 85. *Edit.* Gale.

As

As to what Cenſures may paſs upon me, for venturing theſe Papers into a World which is ſo extreamly fond of Detraction, I ſhall endeavour to bear them with patience, if theſe may prove ſerviceable to any good deſign. I care not how many *ſpeak ill of them, if they have the happineſs to do good to* one *ſingle Perſon, to reform* one *Vice, or to rectify* one *Error. I ſhall gain more by* this, *than I ſhall ſuffer by* that; *and if they* can *be* Patroniz'd *from Contempt, your Lordſhips* Name can Patronize *them.*

If the Eſteem, Deference *and* Honour *which the Offerer has for your Lordſhip, can give a Value and Price to the Offering, this Preſent which I make your Lordſhip, would by them be much rais'd above its true proportion.*

To

To give your Lordſhip all the Inſtance which at preſent I can of my Veneration, I ſhall (againſt the common Mode of Dedications) *abſtain from pretending to draw your Lordſhips* Character, *not only becauſe your Lordſhips Piety and Modeſty diſallow it, nor likewiſe becauſe a Panegyrick would be an unſuitable Introduction to the Nature of my Subjects, but becauſe I cannot reach the height of my Theme, nor draw ſuch daring, majeſtical Lines, as may diſtinguiſh your Lordſhips reſemblance from others. No: let your Lordſhips Praiſes lie where they are, written deep in the Hearts of all thoſe, who wiſh well either to* Religion *or* Learning. *It is enough for me to* admire *at an awful diſtance what I dare not offer to* deſcribe.

I shall close my over-tedious Address, with expressing my satisfaction that I have the Happiness to be the first who have in this publick way congratulated your Lordships Accession to your new Diocese, (to which you were nominated by the wisest of Princes, to comfort it, for the loss of that famous Man, Your Learned Predecessor,) which that You may long adorn with those Virtues and Excellencies which shine in Your Lordship, shall always be zealously wish'd for, by

My LORD,

Your Lordships Most Humble,
Most Obliged, and Most
Obedient Servant,

JA. BUERDSELL.

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A DISCOURSE Concerning Our *Saviour*'s DIVINITY.

1 JOH. ver. 1.

The Word was God.

WHERE Christ is not ſtyl'd the *Word*, purely in a Figurative Sence, as the *Door*, the *Way*, because he diſcover'd to us the Will of God, as Men by Words reveal their Sentiments one to another. For at this rate the Prophets, or Apoſtles, or any Perſon who was ever furniſh'd with God's Authority to make known his Will, might be term'd the *Word* of *God*. But ſince this glorious Character is not given to any but to our *Saviour*, it ſeems to follow, That it muſt be given to him in ſuch an

Valentin. Smalcius Paraphr. in 1. cap. Joh. p. 107.

extraordinary manner, as could not ſute with any one beſides; muſt imply Chriſt Incarnate, God made Man; ſutable to the manner of ſpeaking us'd by *Plato* and others, who make the *Divine Word* to be the Former and Contriver of the World. Tho' as to their making it a Perſon, diſtinct by peculiar acts from the Nature and Mind of God, ſeems only a new Fancy, ſtarted by Modern Divines; particularly by two excellent Perſons of our own Nation: the one the ſtrongeſt, as well as juſteſt Reaſoner; the other the moſt delicate Thinker, which perhaps it ever produc'd. For *Plato* makes the Wiſdom, Power, and other Attributes of God, to be as much perſonally diſtinguiſh'd, as the Nature or Fountain of the Deity, the divine Word, and the divine Mind: and from his Writings we may as well conclude, That all the divine Attributes, of which he had any Idea, were perſonally diſtinguiſh'd, as the three before mention'd. This *Divine Word*, or Chriſt Incarnate, is by St. *John* call'd *God*; not as *Smalcius* imagins, *becauſe all things which appear'd in his Prophetick Function were full of Divinity, and far ſurpaſſing what was diſcoverable in the former Pro-*

Plato in Philebo, p. 30. &c.

A. Bp. *Tillotſon, p.* 590.

Dr. *Scott, Vol.* 2. *p.* 51. *Chriſt. Life, and in his Notes at the end.*

Homil. 1. *in Joh.* 1. 1. *p.* 12 & 13.

Prophets. For every Prophet, who at any time produc'd the divine Credentials, came into the World after an extraordinary, singular and miraculous manner; a divine Lustre spread it self through all their Actions; and whether we regard the Will of God, which they reveal'd, or the Power of the Almighty, by which they supported their Doctrin, there was something Heavenly in both. And according to this Standard of Divinity, they too might put in their pretensions to it, in some measure, as well as our Saviour. Nor is the *Divine Word* stylʼd *God, because he was born after a Divine manner, above the Laws of Nature, of a spotless Virgin.* For then S. *John* Baptist, who was born after as wonderful a manner, in some sence, as our Saviour, might be said to be *God.* For the Nativities of both being miraculous, and Miracles as springing from an equal Power being equal, it cannot be look't on as a greater Miracle, that *Mary* should Conceive, than *Elizabeth.* Nor is he *God, because he was taught by God, after a divine way.* For since God cannot be taught, since infinite Knowledge can admit of no enlargement, there can never from any communica-

Val. Smalcius ibid.

Smalc. ibid.

tion of this kind between God and ſomething elſe, reſult a likeneſs to, much leſs an equality with God. Nor, laſtly, is he *God*, becauſe *He was endued with Divine Innocence.* For from whence does this Innocence ariſe, but from an uniform Obedience to the Will of God? But now if to obey God, makes the Perſon obeying capable of being call'd *God*, the holy Angels, who always preſerv'd the moſt exact conformity to the divine Will, may as juſtly challenge the divine Attributes, as our Saviour. So that by *God* is meant, *God* by Nature and Subſtance: *God*, who had a Subſiſtence, and that Subſiſtence from his Father, of whom he was together from all Eternity, and was Himſelf *Eternal God.* So that the ſence of the words will be, that the *Word*, the *divine Word* which aſſum'd Fleſh, is *God*; not by Office, or any other foreign denomination, but by Nature, Eſſence and Subſtance. In order to prove which, I ſhall

Smalc. Ibid.

First, Shew that the Nature and Eſſence of *Chriſt* is truly Divine.

Secondly, I ſhall reflect on the ill Conſequences of any Aſſertion different from this.

The Nature and Essence of Christ is truly Divine, 1st Because he is justly honour'd with Divine Worship; and 2ly Because of his Co-partnership with God the Father in those actions, which could only be perform'd by his substantial union with the Divine Nature.

First, The Nature of Christ is truly Divine, because he is justly honour'd with Divine Worship. For if nothing can be honour'd with Divine Worship, but *God* himself, and if Christ is honour'd with such a Worship, it follows, that Christ must be truly *God*. But nothing can be worship'd with Divine Worship, but *God* himself. For every act which signifies an Honour peculiar to *God*, signifies also an Excellence, which belongs to none but him; and to ascribe Divine Honour to any Object, is at the same time to attribute Divine Perfections to it. The Command of worshiping the Lord our *God*, and of serving him only, was not a *Temporary Command, which*, as some pretend, *oblig'd purely under the Old Testament*; but is a standing Rule for Divine Worship, under the Gospel, as well as under the Law. For our Saviour did not ab-

Volkel. de ver. Rel. l. 5. c. 29.

rogate any Branch of the Law, but what was meerly Typical. But how could a Precept for Divine Worſhip be a Type? What could it repreſent, or figure out in the Evangelical Oeconomy? But 'tis farther reply'd, That in worſhiping Chriſt, *we worſhip the Father by whom he was endued with ſuch a Power, and that this is the difference between the Worſhip of God, and of Chriſt. That the Worſhip of the former is circumſcrib'd and bounded within Himſelf, whereas that of the latter is only relative*; or as others term it, *God is worſhip'd as the ſupreme cauſe of All things, as the firſt Author of our Salvation; but Chriſt only as the Means which God had appointed to bring about that miraculous Work.* But this way of reaſoning does not only conclude for the worſhiping of Chriſt, but of any other extraordinary Inſtrument of Man's Salvation. The Apoſtles themſelves, on this account, might have been ador'd as well as their Divine Lord and Maſter. And St. *Peter* was not juſtly acquainted with the Privileges annex'd to his Apoſtleſhip, when he reprimanded the devout Centurion, for *falling down at his feet, and worſhiping him.* The chief Objection which can be form'd againſt this Argument,

Jo. Lud. Wolzogen on Matth. 4. 10. p. 189.

ment, is, That *Angels have had Divine Worſhip paid them by the Patriarchs, and therefore Divine Worſhip may be given to others beſides God.* To this the Orthodox reply, and even the *Socinians* themſelves grant, that theſe Angels were *God*, or the *Meſſias* himſelf. That he on ſome great deſign aſſum'd an Angelick Form, as he did afterwards for Man's Salvation an Human Nature; and therefore the paying of Divine Worſhip to Him, was no alienation of it from God. But upon a due enquiry, it will appear, that this is more than the Orthodox ought to have ſaid, or than the *Socinians* had reaſon to have allow'd. For theſe Celeſtial Beings mention'd in Scripture, if ever, yet certainly were not always the *Meſſias*, but ſometimes at leaſt, as they are expreſly, *Angels*. For as the Meſſias never *took on him the Nature of Angels*; ſo neither did he, in all theſe places of Scripture, their Appearance. For the Apoſtle St. *Paul* with a great deal of Elegance and equal Paſſion, recommending the Virtue of Hoſpitality, in alluſion to theſe Texts of Scripture, ſays, That ſome of the Patriarchs in practiſing it, had *entertained Angels unawares*. But would not his Reaſon

Smalc Hom. 1. in 1 Joh.

Junius, Piſcator, and others.

ſon have had much more force, as well as beauty, if they had entertain'd God, or the Meſſias himſelf unawares? What cauſe had he to diſſemble the dignity of the Perſon, who vouchſafed to viſit theſe hoſpitable Roofs, and do an injury, if not to the Truth, at leaſt to his Subject? But to return: Why ſhould this Veneration, which was paid to the Angels, be any thing more, than a Civil Honour and Deference, expreſt indeed after an extraordinary manner, on account of the greatneſs of the Perſons, and the glorious import of their Meſſage? So that from hence cannot be deduc'd any Worſhip due to Angels; nor have we hence any reaſon to conclude, that any thing is to be worſhip'd, beſides *God* alone. As it is thus plain, that *God* only is to be worſhip'd, ſo is it equally ſo, that *Chriſt* may be honour'd with Divine Worſhip. For it is made part of the terms of Salvation, to worſhip him; for *Whoſoever ſhall call upon the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.* Where *Lord* can only be apply'd to our *Saviour Jeſus*, and not to *God* the Father, ſince it agrees only to Him, who, in the former part of the Diſcourſe was, by the Apoſtle, ſtyl'd a *ſtumbling ſtone*, and a

rock

rock of offence, which cannot ſute with God the Father, who was own'd by all Nations, without the leaſt ſcruple. And it is farther to be obſerv'd, that theſe words are cited from the Prophet *Joel*, where the word *Lord* is *Jehovah*, *God* by Nature, Being and Eſſence; not a Creature inveſted with Divinity, according to the new fancy of our Adverſaries.

Secondly, St. *Paul* uſhers in moſt of his Epiſtles with this Prayer, full of Charity, *Grace to you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; combineing *Jeſus* with *God* the Father, which had been the higheſt injury to the former, had the latter only been a Creature, how exalted ſoever his Rank might have been, to have jointly petition'd him, to have given *Grace* and *Peace* to the Saints. And tho' to this it is return'd, That St. *John in the Revelation might, by the ſame reaſon, be ſaid to pray to the ſeven Spirits which were before the Throne of God, and ſo have equal'd them with God*: Yet this objection will rather ſupport our Reaſons, when we conſider, that by the *ſeven Spirits* are to be underſtood the *Holy Ghoſt*, and its ſeven-fold Gifts, as they are brancht out by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, into

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The Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge, of Piety, and of Fear of the Lord. For otherwise why should St. *John* place any other *Spirits* between *God* and *Christ*? Why should he omit the *Holy Ghost*, the *Giver of Grace*, and address himself to Angels, who are but *Ministring Spirits*? So that this, instead of overthrowing what was before laid down, will be a new Instance of joyning nothing with *God*, but what is *God*. Farther, St. *Stephen*, *a Man full of Faith and the Holy Ghost*, recommends his departing Soul to our *Saviour*, as equal to the Father of Spirits, with this solemn Invocation, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.* And tho' to this it is reply'd, That *this act of St.* Stephen's *can be no Precedent to us, because he saw the Heavens open'd, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God*; yet why should the sight or concealment of the object of our Adoration, make it more or less adorable? *God*, tho' *He is a God who hides himself*; who, tho' He inhabits Regions of Eternal Light, is invisible to our Eyes of Flesh; yet is He still to be worship'd with the most humble Devotion. And as long as we are con-

convinc'd by Faith, that *Christ* is ready to succour us in our Necessities, and give us what we ask, we have reason enough to Pray to Him, tho' there is no miraculous opening of the Heavens, nor the glorious Scene withdrawn, to discover *the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.* Farther, At the *Name of Jesus* is not *every knee to bow, of things in Heaven, and things under the Earth?* Are not *all the Angels to worship him?* So that since nothing is to be worship'd but *God*, and Christ is to be worship'd, it follows, that Christ is *God.*

But to make a short Reflection on what has been said on this *Argument.* There is no occasion to prove, to the strict Followers of *Socinus*, that *Christ* ought to be worship'd; for they are as zealous Patrons of his *Worship*, as they are artificial Underminers of his *Divinity.* For *Socinus* expresly *Excommunicates all those, who denied our Saviour's Worship.* He declares, that *If Christ is not to be invok'd, then is he Christ only in Name.* That *such a Notion is a manifest tendency to Judaism, and to exalt* Moses *above* Christ. That *they who are against the Worship of Christ, cannot be Christians; because, tho' they dare*

Socin. ad Præfat. Vuiek. p. 8. Edit. 1624.

Præfat. ad Respons. F. David.

Tom. 1. pag. 656.

not

not openly, yet do they really deny Jesus to be Christ. But that which made it necessary in this Argument, to insist on the *Worship* due to Christ, is the Position of the modern *Socinians*, who finding how hard it was to reconcile the *Worship* of a *God Made*, with the Divine Prohibitions against Idolatry, have thrown off our Saviour's *Worship*, with his *Divinity*. I shall only quote the words of one of their own Party. *There are*, says he, *no acts of Worship requir'd to be paid to the Lord Jesus Christ, but such as may be paid to a Civil Power, to a Person in high Dignity and Office, to Prophets and Holy Men, and to such as are actually possest of the Heavenly Beatitudes.* But to proceed,

Answer to Milbourne, p. 50.

Secondly, Christ, or the *Word* is *God*, because of his Co-partnership with *God* the Father in those Actions, which could only be perform'd by his Substantial union with the Divine Nature. These Actions are, the *Creation of the World*, the *Inspiration of the Prophets*, the *Exercising all power in Heaven and in Earth*; *Raising the Dead out of their Graves, Judging them according to their Works*; the *Destruction of the World*. First, Christ is *God* because of *His Co-partnership with God the*

Fa-

Father in the Creation of the World. For to Create is an act proper to the Deity; *For he ſpake and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt; He hath made the Earth by his Power, he hath eſtabliſhed the World by his Wiſdom, and hath ſtretched out the Heavens by his Diſcretion.* Nor had he any Creature to aſſiſt him in his miraculous Production; for *He is God, even he alone, he made Heaven and Earth.* But 'tis very plain that all things were Created by Chriſt. *For all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made. He was in the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him not.* 'Tis true, the *Socinians* underſtand this Creation, not of the Moſaick forming every thing out of Nothing, but of the New Goſpel-Creation, by which the Reaſonable World (if we may ſo ſtyle it) was put into a capacity of recovering its original Rectitude and Uprightneſs. But this is a forc'd ſence, and quite different from what the ancient Fathers underſtood the words in. Nay, the very *Arians* themſelves apply'd them to a proper Creation; and to obviate the ſtreſs of them, made Chriſt God's Inſtrument, or ſubſervient Power only in

the

the Creation. But as to the *Socinian* ſence, if *Creation* in theſe places is wholly Figurative and Metaphorical, why may it not be ſo in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis* too? Why may not the Creation of the viſible Heavens and the Earth, in the Old Teſtament, be no more than the Foundation of the Jewiſh Commonwealth; ſince it is own'd, that by *New Heavens and new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs*, in the New, no more is underſtood than a renew'd ſtate of things under the Goſpel? Why ſhould *the darkneſs which was upon the face of the Earth*, ſignifie more than that State of ſpiritual Darkneſs, which blinded the whole World before the Moſaick Law? Why might not the *Sun* be the Law, the great Guide of the *Jews*; the *Moon and the Stars* the Laws and Directors of other obſcurer Nations? Why may not the *Firmament amidſt the Waters*, be the Jewiſh Polity ſtruggling with oppoſitions, as the *Earth appearing out of the Waters*, the ſettlement of that State; ſince Waters in Scripture-Language often denote Troubles? And thus a new Face might be put upon the whole Scripture. But farther, to overthrow this novel, and over-refin'd ſence

of

of Creation, St. *Paul* remarks to the *Coloſſians*, that *By Chriſt were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they are Thrones and Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers.* Where it is to be obſerv'd, firſt, That *All in Heaven and Earth*, things void of Reaſon, and ſo not liable to *Error* or *Sin*, and ſo uncapable of this New Creation, were made by *Chriſt*. Secondly, That *Dominions and Powers*, Angels, whether *Good* or *Bad*, were form'd by him: But the *Good* had no need of this New Goſpel-Creation. They never ſtain'd thoſe Robes of Glory with which they were made, and ſo had no need to be *waſhed by the blood of the Lamb*. The *Bad*, as falling from the very Throne of *God*, and deſcending cheaply and fooliſhly into Darkneſs, contracted ſuch a Guilt, as the greateſt Mercy of the Goſpel could not reach: And ſo were unfit Subjects for this New Creation. Thirdly, That it was the aim of this Epiſtle, to oppoſe the Hereſie of *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, and *Baſilides*, whoſe Error it was, *That the World was made by the Angels.* To confront which, S. *Paul* not only ſhews, that Angels themſelves were created, and ſo could

v. Epiphan. p. 56. Edit. Petav.

not

not be Creators; but that they, and the whole World were made by *God*, and *Chriſt*, and the *Holy Spirit*, *Three Perſons and One God*. So that this place can never be underſtood of this New Creation, or Goſpel Renovation. As *Chriſt* is God becauſe he *Created the World*, ſo is he *God*,

Secondly, Becauſe he *Inſpir'd the Holy Prophets*. For he *by whom the Prophets ſpake*, was *God*. For the Word which came by them was the *Word of the Lord*; and the Scriptures which they wrote, is ſaid to be *given by Inſpiration of God*. For *Holy Men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*. But he who ſpeaks by the Holy Ghoſt, ſpeaks by the Spirit of *God* the Son, as well as by the Spirit of *God* the Father. 'Tis true *Schlichtingius* anſwers, *That the Holy Ghoſt is term'd the Spirit of Chriſt, not becauſe he proceeded from Chriſt, but becauſe he ſpake of Chriſt*. But in this ſence the *Holy Ghoſt* might be call'd the Spirit of *Abraham*, or of *Lot*, as well as of *Chriſt*, becauſe he ſpake of them too. Nay, there is no Being ſo evil, which is ever mention'd in Holy Writ, but the ever-bleſſed *Spirit* might be ſaid to be their *Spirit*, according to this wild and uncouth *Hypotheſis*. St.

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Barnabas styles the *Spirit* of the Prophets, the *Spirit of God who should appear in the Flesh. Justin Martyr* says, that *the Prophets were not Self-inspir'd,* ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τοῦ κινοῦντος ἀστὸς θείου λόγου. *Irenæus* against *Marcion* as expressly, that *it was Jesus Christ, who spake to* Abraham *and* Moses. If it was *God* therefore, who *spake by the Prophets,* and *Christ was Co-partner with God the Father in this speaking,* Christ must be *God,* of the same Nature with the Father.

Apolog. 2. p. 76.

Edit. Sylburg. lib. 4. c. 21. Adverf. Hæres. p. 337. Edit. F. Ardent.

Thirdly, Christ is *God,* because of his *Exercising all power in Heaven and in Earth.* For the Government of the World is a Branch of the Divine Prerogative. *He rules over all Kingdoms of the Earth. He whose Name is Jehovah, is the highest over all the Earth.* But *Volkelius* himself, as refin'd an Author as any that Party can boast, freely owns, that *Christ exercises Jurisdiction over all things* (to use his own words) *which are contain'd not only in the vast compass of the Earth, but also of the Heavens. Christ* therefore must be *God.*

De Ver. Rel. Book 3. c. 21.

Fourthly, *Christ is God,* because *He is to raise the Dead from their Graves to Life and a new State.* For none but *He*

who breath'd a living Soul into us, can reſtore it. None but One, whoſe Underſtanding is infinite, who knows every Atome of our Bodies, every Duſt and Particle which belongs to us. He who is conſcious what Duſt appertains to each Body, what Body to each Soul. None but One, whoſe Power is as unbounded as his Knowledge; in regard of whom all Creatures muſt ſuffer and do what he will have them. Who can ſummon and re-aſſemble our ſcatter'd Atomes from the Earth, and from the Waves, and reconcile our long eſtrang'd Parts to their ancient familiarity. Whoſe Voice can awake the ſleepers of Thouſands of Years, ſome to *Peace and Joy*, but ſome to *Miſery and everlaſting Contempt*. But Chriſt is the *Perſon who muſt raiſe the Dead. For the Dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live. All that are in the Graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth, they that have done Good unto the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil unto the Reſurrection of Damnation.*

Fifthly, *Chriſt is God*, becauſe *He ſhall Judge the World*. For it is neceſſary for him who ſhall Judge the World, that he

ſhould

should be intimately acquainted with the Consciences of all Mankind; that all their Thoughts should be *laid naked and open to his view*, and that all the devices of their Hearts should be manifest to him. But none besides God can have such a Knowledge as this: for *Lo! he that declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness; the Lord, the God of Hosts is his Name.* But *Christ is ordain'd by God to be Judge of the Quick and Dead*; and *to this end Christ both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Judge both of the Dead, and the Living*; and so for that reason must be God.

Lastly, *He who shall destroy and change the World, who*, in the Prophet's Language, *shall roll the Heavens together as a Scrowl, the Heavens, which like a wide stretched Scrowl, are written over with beauteous Characters by God's own hand; he is God.* For this is one of the peculiar Actions of *God*, that *he shall destroy the Heavens. For as a Vesture shall he change them, and they shall be changed.* But *Volkelius* owns, that our Saviour has such a power, and *that he shall roll them up together like a Scrowl, and turn*

them. And therefore on that account must be *God*; which may be farther made out:

Secondly, From the ill Consequences of the contrary Assertion. For how open does the *Socinian* Christ lie to the Exceptions of the *Jews*, or the more rational sort of *Deists*, who own a *God*, a Providence, and a future State; and to any who maintain the Unity of the *Godhead*, yet deny the *Divinity* of *Christ*? And is it not very suitable for the *Jews* to reason against Christianity, from the *Socinian* Principles, after this method?

'We are convinc'd from Scripture, 'that there is but one *God*; we know 'that there is no other besides him, or 'with him: for *Who is God save the Lord*, 'and *who is a Rock save our God?* But now 'you introduce one Jesus as *God*, who 'was neither *God* from Eternity, nor by 'Nature and Essence. This new, this cre-'ated God, we look upon as a Fiction; 'we can pay him no Homage, no Ado-'ration, till we have renounc'd *Moses* 'and the *Prophets*, and offer'd violence 'to the Principles of Reason, and Na-'tural Religion. Farther, our God has

'taught

taught us by his Prophet *Isaiah*, that *He even he is the Lord, and beside him there is no Saviour*; and this is spoken Prophetically with regard to the times of the Messias. How then can we own this Jesus for our Saviour, who is by Nature different from God? We are commanded to *worship the Lord our God, and to serve him only*. How then may we worship and serve Jesus, who is a God different from the God of *Israel*? How can we give him equal Honour with the *Lord Jehovah*, without provoking his Wrath, and forcing him to repeat all those Inflictions on us, which our Fathers justly suffer'd? God has expressly declar'd, that *He will not give his glory to another*: but by worshipping your *Jesus*, is not God's Glory given to an Object distinct from God? The Scriptures solemnly inform us, that *God alone sees the Heart and the Reins*, and is conscious to all the Thoughts of Men. If we, as you do, should apply these Actions to the *Man Jesus*, we should be guilty of advancing a false God into the Throne of the Almighty, and making a Creature rival the Deity. Farther,

'Has not God taught us to address
'to him alone in the time of our Di-
'stress, and promis'd his succours to en-
'courage our Prayers? Can we then
'pray to *your Jesus*, whom you your
'selves deny to be the true God of *Israel*?
'The Scripture threatens, that *Gods*
'*which have not made the Heavens and the*
'*Earth, even they shall perish from the*
'*Earth, and from under the Heavens.*
'Can we then honour him for *God*, who
'was so far from *making the Heavens and*
'*the Earth*, that he himself had no Being
'when they were form'd? Or can *God*
'at the last Day be angry at us, for not
'receiving and worshiping him as *God*,
'who according to *Scripture*, was to
'*perish from the Earth, and under the Hea-*
'*vens*? Lastly, The Idea which we
'have and always had of God, repre-
'sents him to our Minds, as *present every*
'*where, Omniscient* and *Almighty*. If
'therefore he, who is offer'd to us to be
'worship'd under these Ideas, is not God
'by Nature, he is to be look'd on as a
'strange God. How can we also ascribe
'these Attributes to *your Jesus*, whom
'you deny to be God by Natures, with-
'out laying our selves under the guilt

'of worshiping strange Gods? If you 'reply, *That the Miracles perform'd by your 'Christ are Motives strong enough to justify 'his Worship, and that the mighty Works 'which he did, prove that he was cloath'd 'with such a Divinity as might deserve 'Honours more than human.* To this, not we, but our God himself shall answer, 'that *If there arise among you a Prophet, 'and give you a sign or a wonder, and the 'sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he 'spake unto you, saying, Let us go after 'other Gods, and let us serve them; Thou 'shalt not hearken unto the words of that 'Prophet.* Such a Prophet as this we 'look on *your Jesus* to be; his Miracles 'of this false nature; because they tend 'to bring us off from the Worship of the 'true *God*, to give part of it to him.

If a *Jew* should make such an Apology as this for the not worshiping and owning of our *Saviour*, I cannot see what a Denier of his Essential *Divinity* could reply to it. It seems to be exactly reason'd in every part, and each Conclusion drawn from their own Principles. Either they must wholly denie his Worship, and so make him a Pure Man; or if he is to be worshipp'd, they must grant, that

he is God by Nature and Essence. *If I am God where is my Worship*, does not hold with greater force against the irreligious despisers of God's Service, than the Reverse of it would do against our Adversaries, *If I am to be worship'd, I am God.*

The summ of all is, That Christ, or the *Word* Incarnate, is *God*; not because *whatsoever appear'd in his Prophetick Function was full of Divinity*, not because *he was born after a divine manner*, not because *he was taught by God*, not because *he was endued with Divine Innocence*, but on account of his Divine Nature and Subsistence; which was prov'd, because *whatsoever is worship'd is God*, and that Christ is to be worshipp'd; and secondly, by reason of his *Co-partnership with God the Father in Divine Actions*; such as are, *The Creation of the World, the Inspiration of the Prophets, the Exercising of Divine Power, the Raising the Dead, the last Judgment, the Destruction of the World.* And in the Second General were shewn the ill Consequences which may be drawn from the contrary Position. So that even the Being and Unity of a God are not clearer Articles of Natural Religion, than the *Divinity* of *Jesus Christ* of the Reveal'd.

A

A DISCOURSE Concerning Our *Saviour's* SATISFACTION.

1 Epist. JOH. Chap. II. ver. 2.

And He is the Propitiation for our Sins.

THE Apostle had in the former Chapter discover'd the inconsistency of a state of Sin with that of Perfection, and that the pretences of reconciling *fellowship with God* with *walking in darkness*, was the greatest aggravation that could heighten any Impiety. That it was *making God a Liar*, and was a positive denial of Actions to be sinful, which he had by the most express Laws and Sanctions declar'd and enacted such. He then shews that the truest Test of, and the securest Method to attain

tain to a perfect State, was to *walk in the Light as God is in the Light*, to partake with Chriſt of his Graces, and to reſemble him in his Purity. That this was the only ſign of the real and unfeign'd *Gnoſtick*; and that we might hence meaſure our Knowledge of God, by our keeping his Commandments. But that if we ſhould fall into any Sin, the way to remove it, was not by ſaying, that we have not ſinn'd; that either our Natures are ſo pure, that they change every thing we do into acts of Piety, or at leaſt that God is willing, out of his favour to us, to overlook our Tranſgreſſions: but that it was our Duty to confeſs our Offences, to acknowledge our Danger, and to flie to God for Pardon upon Repentance. And then he comes to ſtate the nature of Remiſſion, that it was nothing elſe but the applying of our Saviour's Satisfaction, or Propitiation for Sin, to the Penitent: which Propitiation was ſufficient in its nature and force to atone for Sin, and in its extent and compaſs to reach to all the Crimes of Mankind. For —*He is the Propitiation for our ſins.*

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Propitiation is the reconciling of an offended Party to him who has injur'd him, by performing some Act by which his displeasure may be remov'd. And as it is spoken of our Saviour, it intimates, That he has done something so grateful to God, that on consideration of this, God is willing to take Man again into his favour; to forgive him his Sins, and to bestow those Blessings on him, which were due only to his Innocence. By Sins are understood, first, Our inclinations and tendencies to Sin, and then Our voluntary breaches of God's Laws in their utmost extent, with all those Circumstances, which may either heighten or lessen their guilt. For Offences in this latitude, and for Crimes in this compass, is our Saviour a Propitiation.

From the words I shall shew, That Christ is a true and compleat Propitiation for Sin: Where I shall enquire,

First, How Christ is a Propitiation; and then

Secondly, Into the Equity and Reasonableness of his being so.

First, As to the manner of our Saviour's Propitiation. That it was wrought

by

by procuring our Sins to be forgiven, is granted on all sides; but after what manner our Sins were remov'd, is variously disputed. Which Contest being manag'd by the Followers of *Socinus* on one hand, and by those who justly style themselves *Orthodox* on the other; I shall in order to a due determining of this Matter prove, first, That Christ did not propitiate for, nor remove Sin, after any of those methods or ways which *Socinus* contends for, nor that any of them can amount to a Propitiation; and next, I shall state the true Means by which he did really take our Sins away, and propitiate for them. First then, Christ did not propitiate for Sin after any of those ways which *Socinus* contends for, nor can any of them amount to a Propitiation. He did not propitiate for Sin, 1 by *barely laying down his Life to confirm, or bear witness to that Doctrin, or Rule of Life, by the observance of which Remission might be purchas'd*; nor *by gaining or acquiring a Right and Power to forgive Sin, with which he was not invested before*; nor *by meerly leading a Life of Patience, Obedience and Submission to the Will of God, which should be a Pattern to all his*

Socin p 165. & passim.

Crellius against Grotius p. 4. &c.

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Followers, and by the imitation of which they should certainly procure Remission; nor lastly, *was in the Death of Christ consider'd only as a strong and active perswasive to perform those Terms, which are necessary to the taking away of Sin, which wrought this Propitiation.* Not any of these separately, nor all of them united, how far soever conducing to apply this Propitiation, were the thing it self.

Christ did not propitiate for Sin, by *barely laying down his Life to confirm, or bear witness to that Doctrin, in which Remission of Sin was contain'd.* For this makes the Death of Christ rather a Consequent, or an Effect of this Remission, than the efficient Cause or Producer of it. For the Existence, or the Being of any thing, is the Cause, as well as the Measure of the Testimony, and not the Testimony the Cause of the Existence. Therefore if Christ's Death was only a Testimony to that in which Remission of Sins is included, it has no share in it. A Testimony in proportion to the Character and Worth of the Testator may give Light to those who are ignorant, or Conviction to those who doubt of any Matter; but can contribute nothing

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of reality to the thing it ſelf. But it is plain from Scripture, that Chriſt's Death did really, effectively and antecedently work to the Remiſſion of Sins. And that *we have Redemption in his Blood, the forgiveneſs of Sins. That the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all Sin; and that without ſhedding of Blood there is no Remiſſion.* Therefore this *ſhedding of Blood* muſt be ſomething more than a bare Teſtimony to the Doctrin, in which *Redemption, Forgiveneſs, Cleanſing from Sin,* and *Remiſſion* are imply'd; muſt be the very Conveyer of theſe Bleſſings to us, without which we had been *ſtill in our Sins,* and under an indiſpenſible obligation to Puniſhment for them. For at this rate the Blood of the Martyrs might purify us from Guilt, as well as that of our Saviour, ſeeing that that too was ſpilt as a Teſtimony to the ſame Doctrin. Nay, their Blood was on this account a more full and extenſive Teſtimony to Chriſtianity, even than his; becauſe, when our Saviour died, tho' the Morals of the Chriſtian religion were brought to their perfection, yet there was ſomething farther to be added as Objects of Faith and Belief, which were not yet accompliſh'd;

pliſh'd; as our Saviour's Reſurrection from the Dead, and Aſcenſion into Heaven. Now to theſe our Saviour's Death could bear no Teſtimony, as being reſults from it, and tranſacted after it; but the Death of the Martyrs ſtill ratify'd and ſettl'd this fundamental Truth of Chriſt's being riſen again, which by being eſtabliſh'd it ſelf, confirm'd all the reſt. Now *Socinus* himſelf freely owns, that the Reſurrection of our Saviour is a neceſſary Article of our Belief, and an eſſential Principle of our Religion. Nay, this is almoſt the only one of the *Socinian* Creed which regards our Saviour. And *Socinus* applies Remiſſion of Sins to this, rather than to our Saviour's Death; becauſe that the Hopes of that glorious State of which our Saviour took poſſeſſion, upon his Reſurrection, have the ſtrongeſt Influences to reform our Lives; which Reformation is immediately attended with the Remiſſion of Sins. So that the force of the Argument will be this, That if all that our Saviour did towards Remiſſion of Sin, was only giving Teſtimony by his Death to that Doctrin in which Remiſſion was preached; then the Primitive Martyrs, who

bore witneſs to this Doctrin by laying down their Lives for it, when it was advanc'd to a fuller extent, did more abundantly, at leaſt equally co-operate to this Forgiveneſs. But ſince this Remiſſion is never attributed to any Teſtimony of theirs, it follows, That our Saviour made his Propitiation by ſome other act than this of Teſtifying. Moreover, as the reaſon why our Saviour was put to Death, was not his preaching *Repentance* and *Forgiveneſs of Sins*, but his *declaring* himſelf the *Son of God*; ſo that which he atteſted by his Death, was rather his own Divinity, than the Truth of what he had before taught. But granting that it might be one of the leſs principal Deſigns of our Saviour's Death, to give Sanction to his Doctrin by his Blood, yet this could not perform it ſo ſutably, and ſo completely, as his Miracles did; which were fully adapted to this purpoſe, and to which he addreſſes, as to the exact ſtandard by which his Doctrin might be examin'd. 'Tis true, that to die for a Man's own Sentiments, is a bold and a gallant appeal, and a ſufficient warrant, that he himſelf believes what he ſays; but this

is not ſecurity enough for me to aſſent to his Tenents; becauſe he may be miſtaken in the Truth of that, which he himſelf is very conſcientiouſly perſwaded of. For as Falſhood may be maintain'd with equal warmth and zeal as Truth, ſo may it be ſuffer'd for, with reſembling Patience. But when Miracles are once brought to ſecond a Doctrin, theſe ſilence any farther doubts; I yield, I am convinc'd: for theſe are either contrary to the Laws of Nature, or above them, and ſo are immediately acted by God himſelf, who will neither exerciſe his own Power, nor delegate it to any other, to ratify a Lie, or grace an Impoſtor. So that ſince our Saviour's Miracles were more proper, more clear and viſible Teſts of his Doctrin than his Death, if his Propitiation, or what he did towards the aboliſhing of Sin, conſiſted only in bearing witneſs to his Doctrin, it might rather be deriv'd from theſe, than from his Blood; which is a Paradox which hitherto has never been advanc'd.

To proceed: This Propitiation cannot conſiſt in *Chriſt's meerly gaining or purchaſing, by his Death, a Right or Title*

to forgive Sin. For our Saviour did not purchaſe any ſuch Right by his Death, becauſe he was inveſted with it long before he ſuffer'd; and when a Perſon is once legally poſſeſt of any Right, he needs no ſubſequent act to appropriate it more cloſely to him. But that our Saviour had ſuch a Right before his Crucifixion, is plain, as from ſeveral other places of Scripture, ſo from that inſtance of his *Healing the ſick of the Palſy*; where he Prefaces his miraculous Cure with that comfortable Declaration of, *Son thy ſins are forgiven thee.* And leſt it might be urg'd, That this was only a removing of his temporal Puniſhment, it is very apparent that our Saviour diſtinguiſhes between theſe two Acts, by ſubjoyning the other Command of, *Son take up thy bed and walk*, which had been utterly needleſs, if the former words had implied a Cure of his Diſeaſe. Nor can it be ſhewn, That Propitiation for Sin can coincide with a Right of forgiving Sin; for the former pre-ſuppoſes an offended Party, which muſt be ſatisfy'd; an offending one, which is of it ſelf unable to attone its Anger; and laſtly, a Mediator or Sequeſter, to finiſh the Reconcilement.

cilement. So that three Terms are neceſſary to make up an entire Propitiation; but a Donation (and a gratuitous Remiſſion is nothing elſe) is only between two, where there are no inſuperable Hindrances or Lets, why the Donor ſhould not ſuffer his Bounty to ſtream freely out towards the Indigent, without any third Perſon to interpoſe for him, or to bear his Puniſhment.

Farther: Neither did Chriſt propitiate by *meerly giving us an Example of Obedience, which if we tranſcribe, we ſhall aſſuredly have our Sins pardon'd.* For how much ſoever our Saviour's Example may be ſerviceable to our Sanctification, it can have no regard to our Pardon. For if we can work out our own Pardons, by an exact and unerring Imitation of our Saviour's Obedience, the exactneſs of which muſt conſiſt in gaining the ſame Ends, by the ſame Means; then did our Saviour at this rate, by his own Obedience, work out a Pardon for himſelf, or elſe he could be no Precedent for us. But he did not purchaſe any Pardon for himſelf, becauſe he never ſtood in need of any; never tranſgreſs'd the Law at any time,

nor had any occaſion of having it diſpenc'd with on his account. Tho' *He was number'd with Tranſgreſſors*, yet it was only in their Puniſhment, not in their Crimes. Tho' *His Soul was made an Offering for Sin*, yet was it *for our Tranſgreſſions that he was wounded, and bruiſed for our Iniquities*. So that tho' by keeping cloſe to our Saviour's Example, we may be Holy as he is Holy; yet cannot we by this procure our own Pardons for former Sins.

To cloſe all: *The Death of Chriſt conſider'd only as a Motive to an Holy Life, and as inſpiring into us the Hopes of a future State of Glory, and ſo perſwading us to perform what is neceſſary to Remiſſion*, cannot be the Propitiation expreſs'd in the Words. For what force could the diſgraceful and bloody Death of an innocent Perſon, and of one who had made it his Buſineſs to *go about doing good*, have, to convince Men, That God was a Rewarder of Virtue and Integrity? Would it not rather diſcourage Men from the practice of Perfections, which were crown'd indeed but with Thorns, and whoſe only Exaltation was on the Croſs, to make them more conſpicuous

ſpicuous Inſtances of Woe and Infamy? *Socinus* himſelf foreſaw the power of this Objection, and to evade it, he has recourſe to the little Sophiſtry of ſaying, that *Indeed there was no great Efficacy in the Death of Chriſt, to be an Incentive to a good Life, and ſo to make way for Remiſſion; but that there was in his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion into Heaven, which were Conſequents of his Death; and that the Glories of that Kingdom he then took poſſeſſion of, carry the ſtrongeſt Rhetorick in them, to move us to abandon our Sins, and lead Lives of Righteouſneſs.* This is a miſerable way of reaſoning. For would the Scripture apply the Propitiation ſo often, and ſo expreſly, to the *Death*, the *Blood*, the *Sufferings of Chriſt*, if it was all this while his Reſurrection which effected the Remiſſion of Sins? Nay, Does it not oppoſe the Benefits flowing from the Reſurrection, to thoſe reſulting from the Death of our Lord, informing us, that *Chriſt died for our Sins*, but that *he roſe again for our Juſtification*? How then can theſe Acts in all regards be coincident, be the ſame? His Reſurrection indeed was a Confirmation, a Juſtifying to the World, That he had

to forgive Sin. For our Saviour did not purchaſe any ſuch Right by his Death, becauſe he was inveſted with it long before he ſuffer'd; and when a Perſon is once legally poſſeſt of any Right, he needs no ſubſequent act to appropriate it more cloſely to him. But that our Saviour had ſuch a Right before his Crucifixion, is plain, as from ſeveral other places of Scripture, ſo from that inſtance of his *Healing the ſick of the Palſy*; where he Prefaces his miraculous Cure with that comfortable Declaration of, *Son thy ſins are forgiven thee.* And leſt it might be urg'd, That this was only a removing of his temporal Puniſhment, it is very apparent that our Saviour diſtinguiſhes between theſe two Acts, by ſubjoyning the other Command of, *Son take up thy bed and walk*, which had been utterly needleſs, if the former words had implied a Cure of his Diſeaſe. Nor can it be ſhewn, That Propitiation for Sin can coincide with a Right of forgiving Sin; for the former pre-ſuppoſes an offended Party, which muſt be ſatisfy'd; an offending one, which is of it ſelf unable to attone its Anger; and laſtly, a Mediator or Sequeſter, to finiſh the Reconcilement.

cilement. So that three Terms are neceſſary to make up an entire Propitiation; but a Donation (and a gratuitous Remiſſion is nothing elſe) is only between two, where there are no inſuperable Hindrances or Lets, why the Donor ſhould not ſuffer his Bounty to ſtream freely out towards the Indigent, without any third Perſon to interpoſe for him, or to bear his Puniſhment.

Farther: Neither did Chriſt propitiate by *meerly giving us an Example of Obedience, which if we tranſcribe, we ſhall aſſuredly have our Sins pardon'd.* For how much ſoever our Saviour's Example may be ſerviceable to our Sanctification, it can have no regard to our Pardon. For if we can work out our own Pardons, by an exact and unerring Imitation of our Saviour's Obedience, the exactneſs of which muſt conſiſt in gaining the ſame Ends, by the ſame Means; then did our Saviour at this rate, by his own Obedience, work out a Pardon for himſelf, or elſe he could be no Precedent for us. But he did not purchaſe any Pardon for himſelf, becauſe he never ſtood in need of any; never tranſgreſs'd the Law at any time,

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by his Death purchas'd Remiſſion of Sins to the Penitent; but it neither was the Remiſſion it ſelf, nor any way concurr'd to it, more than by begetting in us a Faith in his Death and Merits.

The ſumm of what has been ſaid, is, That Chriſt did not propitiate for Sin *By dying to bear witneſs to his Doctrin*; becauſe then his Death would only have been a Teſtimony of his Propitiation, and not the Thing it ſelf: Nor *By gaining a power to forgive Sin*; becauſe he had This before he died: Nor *By ſetting his Life out to be an Example to his Followers*; becauſe this Example has no force to purifie and abſolve from Sins, at leaſt from paſt Sins: Nor, laſtly, did his Death conſider'd *as a Motive to an holy Life free from Sin*; becauſe Chriſt's Death ſimply and abſtractedly conſider'd, as the Death of a Juſt Man, without its effect of actually removing Sin, is not ſuch a Motive. As to the *Enthuſiaſt*'s method of *Satisfaction*, which they reſolve only into a *ſpiritual ſhedding of the blood in their Hearts*; 'tis a changing this comfortable Doctrin wholly into an Allegory, and a ſubſtituting an imaginary phantaſtick Saviour inſtead of

W. Penn's Chriſtian Quaker, p. 102.

of a true one. And as none of these ways singly takes away Sin, so neither do they all of them combin'd: For the result of them all is this, That God sent Christ into the World to live a Life of Righteousness, and to die an ignominious Death; only to be a more successful Instrument to reform the Sinner, and to prevent Sin for the future. But if Christ did nothing but this, How could his Merits reach to Sins committed before this Repentance or Reformation? These would still lie open to the Divine Vengeance, to the Wrath of that God, who has too high a respect for his own Laws, to suffer any breach of them to go unpunish'd; but will certainly revenge them either on the Sinner himself, or at least on his Proxy. And tho' the Sinner should at length correct his ways, yet what compensation would this be for his former Violations of the Commands of God? Would this be any thing else, but beginning to do that at last, which he was always oblig'd to do? So I shall proceed to state the true Means by which Christ did really take away our Sins, and propitiate for them.

And to clear this Caſe from its original, it is to be obſerv'd, That God as the Governour of Mankind, gave them a Law, which was to be the general Rule of all their Actions; This Law he ſecures on each hand, as all other wiſe Magiſtrates, with Penalties ſutable to the power of the Lawgiver, which being Omnipotent, they too muſt of conſequence be Infinite and Eternal. The keeping of the Commands of God bleſt with everlaſting Life, the breach of them puniſh'd with equal Miſery. This was the original Covenant, or Contract, between God and Man, which was very juſt to be impos'd on Man in his Integrity, for then he was endued with ſtrength to perform the Condition; and was as equitable to be exacted from him after his Fall, becauſe he had contracted his weakneſs and inſufficiency by his own fault, and had willingly diſabled himſelf. But God was more merciful than to deal with him according to the rigour of Juſtice; he had a compaſſionate ſence of that helpleſs State into which he was ſunk, and was willing to accept of a Propitiation. He knew that the Sins he ſhould commit in his faln

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Condition, would be of a different Character from those of the Angels, and therefore were more mercifully to be proceeded against. That the Angels were irreclaimably lost, because God had done for them all that could be done; had created them so perfect, that they had a whole prospect of their Duty at one view; knew when they fell as much as they could know, and therefore admitted of no room for Repentance, or alteration of their choice. But that Man receives the Knowledge of his Duty by degrees, and advances into a Mind prepossest with the prejudices of Sense, and therefore may see farther and farther into things, so as to correct his Errors, and repent of them. That his Passions grow strong before his Reason has force to govern them. That his Duties are so many, that in some cases they are almost inconsistent. That even when he sins and provokes his Maker, there are secret declarations in his Conscience against what he acts; or, in the Language of the Apostle, *The Evil that he would not, that he does.* Such Considerations as these mov'd the merciful God to be willing to receive Man to

favour;

favour; made him inclinable to be reconcil'd, and to mitigate that Anger he had juſtly conceiv'd againſt him for the breach of his Laws. But it is impoſſible that God ſhould be pacify'd, while the Law which Man has broken, and which the weakneſs of his Nature tempts him ſtill to violate, remains in its ſeverity. There can be no Peace between God and Man, while this is to be executed upon every failure; while Man is born under almoſt a neceſſity of Sinning, and yet oblig'd to a neceſſity of Innocence. Something muſt be done to this Law, before God's diſpleaſure can be remov'd; and if ſo, *This Law muſt either be wholly taken away*, or *Explain'd in a more eaſy Sence*, or ſome other ſatisfaction made it.

But the Law, which ought to have been the Rule of Man's Life, *could not be repeal'd and quite taken away.* For then Man either muſt be left Lawleſs, or ſome other Law made in the room of it. The former throws down all the boundaries of Virtue and Vice, gives encouragement to every Irregularity, excludes God out of the Government of the World, and places Man in the wildeſt

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State of Nature, accountable to none but himself for his Actions. If a new Law is to be substituted, either this Law must partake something of the former, or be oppos'd to it. If it has somewhat of the Injunctions of the old Law, it must have as much of the Difficulties of it too; oppos'd it cannot be, for the former Law rises so regularly from the Nature of Things, that whatsoever should command any thing contrary to it, would enjoin what is unjust, and therefore would be null as soon as promulg'd.

Neither could this *Law have a milder and more equitable Sence or Construction put upon it,* to soften its hardness, that Man might in some measure evade the Obligation, and therefore the Penalty of it. For a mild interpreting of a Law is only a shewing, That some Persons or Actions are not comprehended under it. As the ancient *Heathens* were not oblig'd by the *Jewish* Judicial or Ceremonial Law, or the present *Chinese* by the Evangelical. As Works of Religion and Mercy are not included under the Prohibition of working on the Sabbath. But neither of these can take any place

here.

here. For Man could not pretend to be exempted from a Law, which was made and deſign'd for him, and could not be ſutable to any other Order of Beings. Nor could any Actions be excepted out of it, for then muſt all Actions be ſo; for tho' particular Perſons might only break the Law in ſome ſpecial parts, and therefore only have need of having thoſe Actions Privileg'd, which were contrary to it; yet Mankind in general would violate every Branch of it: ſo that all Actions in groſs muſt be put out of its reach; which is the ſame with an Abrogation, or Repeal.

But there was a different Method from all theſe. A Method by which the Law might be retain'd in its Majeſty, as well as Integrity; not *one jot or tittle of it paſs away*, and yet Man be freed from its Rigour. This was, if a third Perſon would interpoſe, and undergo the Puniſhment due to the Offenders: would ſatisfy the Divine Wrath, and propitiate for Mankind. For the Dignity or Honour, as well as the Force of a Law, is ſufficiently preſerv'd, if either its Injunctions are kept, or ſatisfactory Puniſhment inflicted. But, *Who can*

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ſtand before God when he is angry? Or, Who attone for the Sin of Mankind? Which of all the Angels or Arch-Angels can ſuſtain the Perſon of a Mediator, and ſatisfy the Law which we have broke? Which in the Language of the Holy *Job*, might *like a Dayſman betwixt God and us, lay his hand on us both.* For *God is not a Man, as we are, that we ſhould anſwer him, and ſhould come together in Judgment.* The moſt perfect of Created Beings would ſhrink under ſo vaſt a Burthen. So that the Son of God himſelf muſt be deputed for ſo glorious a purpoſe. *He that comes from* Edom, *with dyed Garments from* Bozrah. *Wherefore is he red in his Apparel, and his Garments like him that treadeth in the Wine-fat?* The reaſon is, becauſe *He has trodden the Wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with him.* And *in this God commended his Love towards us, that while we were yet Sinners Chriſt died for us.* That *the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him*, and that *with his ſtripes we were healed.* For as by his Life he fulfill'd every part of the Law, did whatſoever it had enjoin'd, and ſo perform'd our Righteouſneſs; ſo by ſubſtituting

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himſelf to bear the Puniſhment of our Tranſgreſſions, by enduring what the Law had threatned, he diſſolv'd our Obligation to thoſe Sufferings, which were due to us according to the Order of the Divine Juſtice, and pacify'd the Deity's Fury; the Law being ſtill retain'd in its original Majeſty. And both theſe as well the Innocence of his Life, as the Meritoriouſneſs of his Death, were neceſſary for the Perſon who ſhould attone for the Sins of Mankind. For had not his Life been wholly made up of Obedience, had there been one flaw, one Tranſgreſſion in it, he could not have been that holy and unſpotted Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World. All that he could have done, would have been to have died for his own Offences, if perhaps he could have waſh'd out his Perſonal ſtains by his Blood. But as to our Faults, it muſt coſt more to redeem them; the Sacrifice which can expiate for them muſt have nobler Qualifications: ſo that *He muſt let that alone for ever.* The Innocence of his Life was therefore not only an accompliſhing of the Law in our ſtead, and a Rule for us to act by; but was in a more peculiar

liar manner a Qualification also to prepare him to suffer duly for our Sins.

Which Passion was the formal Act which took away our Transgressions. On him they were laid, and he paid the Price of them. By this Act, and under this Qualification *did he propitiate for our sins.*

Secondly, The equitableness of which Propitiation, by removing the Penalty from the Sinner to a Stipulator, who engages himself to suffer for the Guilty, is the next thing to be consider'd.

If there was any Injustice in this, as *Socinus* pretends there is, it must either consist in this, That an innocent Person underwent a most barbarous, poinant, as well as shameful Death; that One in whose Mouth was found no Guile, was oppress't, was afflicted, as well as despis'd and rejected of Men; or else because he endur'd all this for our Sins. But there is no Injustice in the former, because it is plain from Scripture, and *Socinus* himself owns, That our Saviour, after a Life of the most spotless Innocence, had it taken away by the most cruel and ignominious Death; a Death

of

of Slaves and Malefactors. And this not only by the Permiſſion, but even by the Ordinance and immediate Act of God; for *He was ſtricken, ſmitten of God and afflicted*, and *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? Far be it from God, that he ſhould do Wickedneſs, and that the Almighty ſhould pervert Judgment.* So that the Enquiry will be this, Whether it is conſiſtent with Equity, that the Holy JESUS, the true and uniform Pattern of all Virtue, ſhould be thus ſeverely puniſh'd, as the Propitiator for us Sinners. And that he ſhould be ſo, is neither irreconcilable with that poſitive Juſtice or Equity, which God has reveal'd in his Word, nor with that Natural Juſtice which may be drawn from the Reaſon of Mankind, and the Practice and Uſage of Nations, and which *Socinus* ſo much inſiſts on. The derivation of Puniſhment from the Tranſgreſſor to the Innocent, is not irreconcilable with the Divine Word. For it is not irreconcilable with the Divine Word, either that an Innocent ſhould be puniſh'd for the Sins of the Guilty; or that he ſhould be in ſuch manner puniſh'd, that the Guilty may be freed from

from the Penalty due to Guilt. First, 'Tis not irreconcilable with Scripture, that the Innocent should be punish'd for the Sins of the Guilty. For is not *Canaan* sentenc'd to be *a Servant of Servants*, for the Unnaturalness of his Father *Ham*? Are not seven Men of *Saul*'s Sons *hanged up to the Lord*, for his Treachery? Are not seventy Thousand cut off for the Sin of *David*? Which forc'd from him that Pathetical Exclamation, worthy such a Prince: *Lo! I have sinned, and I have done wickedly*; but *these Sheep what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my Father's house.* And in general, tho' it is the Character of the Lord, that *He is Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth*; yet do not the very next words inform us, that *He visits the Iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, and upon the Children's Children, unto the third and fourth Generation*? And does not the Prophet in the *Lamentation*, personating *Sion*, complain, *Our Fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have born their Iniquities*? Farther, It is not irreconcilable with Scripture-Justice, that the Guilty may be freed

from the Penalty, which the Innocent have undergone, or (which is the ſame) are to undergo. To prove this, I ſhall only produce one Inſtance; that of *Ahab*, who for his ſhort and tranſient Repentance, and *which paſt away like the morning dew*, had the Judgment denounc'd againſt him, executed on his Poſterity: *Seeſt thou how* Ahab *humbleth himſelf? becauſe he humbleth himſelf before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; in his Sons days will I bring the evil on his houſe.* As Puniſhment by deputation is thus reconcilable with the ſentiments God's Word gives us of Juſtice, ſo is it equally ſo with the Practice or Uſage of Nations. Firſt, it is agreeable to theſe, That one Man ſhould lay down his Life for another's Crimes; and next, That the Guilty ſhould gain Impunity by ſomething which has been ſuffer'd for him. Firſt, it is conſiſtent with the Uſage of Nations, that one Man ſhould lay down his Life for another's Crimes. In the Affair of Pledges in War, receiv'd by all Countries, are not theſe ſacrific'd to the Fury of their Enemies, for the Perfidiouſneſs of their Fellow-Citizens? Do they not die for Violations of Faith, which

which sometimes they could not so much as contrive or design, as being Children; never execute, as being Prisoners? Did the most human and compassionate of Princes ever think it any reflection on his Justice, to take the Forfeiture? Or could Justice be preserv'd in the World without such Examples? When one Prince is notoriously injur'd by another, did the injur'd ever esteem it unjust or barbarous, to revenge himself on his Enemy's innocent Subjects; to burn, ravage and destroy Cottages, for the Affronts and Villanies of the Palace; to kill or enslave the Peasant, for the wicked Counsel of the Statesman? When the Law of War is broke between two Generals, is not he without regard to any antecedent Demerit always the most guilty, who is first caught? In the Decimation of mutinous Souldiers, may not the fatal Lot fall on the peaceable and harmless, as well as on the stubborn and rebellious? Or is there some secret Oracle in the Chances, which infallibly guides them to the Offenders? Or is it Injustice to punish the unfortunate Condemn'd, how guiltless soever? As it is thus consistent

sistent with the Use of Nations, That one should suffer for another's Crimes; so is it not less so, That the Guilty should gain Impunity, by something which has been suffer'd for him. Thus in the instance of Sacrifices, receiv'd into the Religion of all Nations; whatsoever the matter of them was, whether it was *Thousand of Rams*, or whether they brought *their first-born, and offer'd the fruit of their Bodies for the sin of their Souls*; yet the intention of them both, was to procure Impunity to the Sinner, by laying the Punishment somewhere else. And how useless soever the former might be, or how cruel the latter; yet both prove, That it was the Sentiments of Mankind, that freedom from Penalty might be purchas'd by a vicarious Infliction. There was nothing therefore in our Saviour's Suffering, which is inconsistent with the constant sence of Mankind, in regard to the Expiation of Guilt. Nor is there any thing in it unjust, whether we examine it by the Rules of Justice display'd in the Word of God, or by the Usage of Nations. Nor, farther, is there any thing in it unreasonable, which is now to be made

out. For it was reasonable that Christ should die for our Sins: because, first, It is reasonable that God should release the Punishment due to our Sins; and next, That he should remit it by the method of punishing Christ in our stead.

That God should release our Punishment, is reasonable, whether we consider the Nature of God, whose Goodness must strongly plead before the Throne of Grace for fain Man's Remission, even before there was any other Advocate; or whether we consider the Nature of that Service, which God exacts from Man. For God never obliges to Duty, where he has put himself out of a possibility of requiting it. But while Man's Sins were unforgiven, while his obligation to Punishment remain'd, it was not in the power of God to reward his Piety. Since undistinguishing Misery was to be his Doom at last, and was to be the common Event of all; both of *those who sacrificed, and those who sacrificed not.*

It being therefore thus reasonable, That God should release Man's Punishment; it is as reasonable, That he

ſhould lay this Puniſhment on Chriſt. For either the Puniſhment muſt be laid on Chriſt, or on ſome other, or be remitted without any Satisfaction.

But without Satisfaction (whatſoever the *Deiſt* may fancy) the Penalty could not be ſutably remov'd: for, that God ſhould pardon Sin, without receiving any Satisfaction, is, firſt, againſt his Nature and Being; for *He is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil*, and *cannot look on Iniquity*. Againſt his Juſtice, becauſe as a juſt and righteous Governour of the World, he may not ſuffer his Laws to be affronted, without vindicating their Honour. Againſt his Truth, ſince in his firſt Covenant with Man, he has inſeparably combin'd Sin and Puniſhment: *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.*

Nor could the Puniſhment be laid on any other, but Chriſt; becauſe none, except one of the Perſons of the ever-bleſſed *Trinity*, could ſuffer Puniſhment ſufficient to clear the Guilty. For it was infinite Majeſty which was injur'd, and it muſt be ſatisfy'd by Majeſty as infinite. But it was not reaſonable, that the *Father*, who in the Oeconomy

and Order of the *Trinity* is ſuperiour to the *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt*, ſhould by this Humiliation be debas'd below them both. It was not meet that the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould propitiate; becauſe he was to be ſent by the Mediator, in order to the applying of the Salvation, which he ſhould purchaſe. So that whatſoever imaginary Models the *School-men* may raiſe of other Methods, by which God might ſave the World; yet there is none which agrees with Reaſon in all Points, but the Propitiation which Chriſt wrought through his Sufferings.

The ſumm of all is, That Chriſt is become our Propitiation; not *by Dying to bear witneſs to any ſaving, or ſanctifying Doctrin*; not *by gaining a Right by his Death to forgive Sin*; not *by giving us an Example, by which we may have our Sins pardon'd*; not *by any Encouragement his Death might yield us to an holy Life*; not *by any of theſe ſingle*, nor *by all united*; but *by Dying for our Sins*, and paying a Price tantamount to our Tranſgreſſions. By clearing the Mulct, which the breach of the Divine Law had contracted; by an Act, which at once ſecures Honour

to the Law, and Impunity to the Offenders. Which Subſtitution of our Saviour, to ſuffer for our Sins, was ſhewn to be Juſt and Reaſonable. Juſt, as having nothing in it which diſagrees either with other methods of Divine Juſtice, or with Human Proceedings; Reaſonable, as being the only means by which God might ſhew his high value of his own Commands, and yet his compaſſion for his Creatures; and by one well-mixt Action, diſplay at the ſame time both his Juſtice, and his Mercy.

A DISCOURSE Concerning MIRACLES.

HEB. Chap. II. ver. 4.

God also bearing them witness, both with Signs, and Wonders, and with divers Miracles.

THE Apostle, in the entrance of this Chapter, informs us, That Christ being a Prophet so much surpassing all before him, and now advanc'd above the Angels to his Royal Office in Heaven, whereby he is certainly able to perform what he foretold; we ought in all reason to heed his Predictions, and to make use of them as means to fortifie us, when we are tempted to Sin or Apostacy. For if the Law were

were given only by the Miniſtry of Angels, and yet the Threats on the breaking of that did come to paſs, and all the Sins committed by the *Iſraelites* againſt it, were ſeverely chaſtis'd, and the Tranſgreſſors not ſuffer'd to enter into the promis'd Land; How ſhall we avoid equal Puniſhment, if we do not, by Conſtancy and Obedience, make our ſelves capable of that Deliverance, which Chriſt firſt at his being upon Earth, and the Apoſtles which heard it from him, aſſur'd us of; and which God himſelf has teſtify'd, by ſo many Prodigies, and ominous Preſages? And by giving them, who foretold 'em, Power to work Miracles, and other Abilities of the Spirit: *God alſo bearing them witneſs, both with Signs, and Wonders, and with divers Miracles.*

By *Wonders*, in a ſtrict ſence, are meant any extraordinary, ſurprizing, and new Operations, whether ſpringing from a divine Power, or a natural. By *Miracles* are underſtood Effects of a divine and infinite Power, whether wrought privately or publickly, on purpoſe to confirm any Doctrin, or without any ſuch deſign. Thus our Saviour's

Faſt

Fast for fourty Days, was a *Miracle*, tho' it was not wrought for the confirmation of any Doctrin, nor before any publick Assembly of Spectators. A *Sign* is something more than a *Wonder*, or a *Miracle*; for it is wrought publickly by an infinite Power, in confirmation of a Doctrin. Thus our Saviour's changing Water into Wine, is said to be the first of his *Miracles* of this kind; that is, the first of his *Signs*: ἐποίησεν τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων ὁ Ἰησοῦς. For as to pure Miracles, he had acted several before; as his Fast for fourty Days, the Descent of the *Holy Ghost* in a Bodily shape. This is the distinction of the *Schools*, tho' in common acceptation, *Signs* and *Miracles* are taken in the same sence: Under which Notion I shall consider them, and shew

vid. Aquin. 2. 2dæ q. 178. art. 1. ad 3.

First, What a *Miracle* is.

Secondly, I shall examine what Power is capable of working a *Miracle*.

Thirdly, I shall enquire into some of those Marks, by which we may distinguish a true *Miracle* from a false one.

Fourthly, I shall prove, That the *Miracles* wrought by *Jesus Christ*, and his Apostles, have all these Marks of a true *Miracle*.

Lastly,

Laſtly, I ſhall cloſe all, by briefly ſhewing, That tho' Chriſtianity was at firſt eſtabliſh'd by *Miracles*; yet that there is no reaſon, that we ſhould expect a continu'd ſucceſſion of them to the preſent times.

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew what a *Miracle* is.

A Miracle is ſomething that ſurpaſſes the Power of Men, or of Nature; wrought in favour of a Perſon, who knows that this Miracle ſhall be thus tranſacted. 'Tis a Work that ſurpaſſes the Power of Men, or of Nature: for let an Effect be never ſo ſurprizing or extraordinary, yet while it is within the force of ſecond Cauſes, it is no Miracle. It muſt (in ſtrict ſpeaking) bear the lively Impreſſion, and ſovereign Stamp of *Divinity* upon it; ſo that we may, without hazard of being deceiv'd, boldly vouch, that *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* Which we may ſafely ſay, when Diſeaſes are cur'd by a Touch; the tumultuous Seas calm'd by a Rebuke; and the Dead rais'd by the Command of One, who aſſum'd no more than the Form of a Man. When the Unlearned

ſpeak

ſpeak Languages, which they never learn'd. When the Flames ſhall loſe their deſtructive Nature, and inſtead of conſuming, guard. When a Hand rais'd up ſhall determine the Fate of Armies. When the Lord ſhall *hearken to the voice of Man, inſomuch that the Sun ſhall ſtand ſtill upon* Gibeon, *and the Moon in the Valley of* Ajalon. As a Miracle thus ſurpaſſes the Power of Nature, ſo the Perſon in favour of whom it is wrought, ought to know that this Miracle ſhall be thus wrought. He ought either to know in particular, that this Miracle will be wrought, and no other; or that a Miracle of ſome kind will be wrought, when natural Helps ſhall fail. Thus *Moſes*, when *Pharaoh* preſt behind, and the *Red-Sea* rag'd before, tho' he ſeems to have had no ſpecial Revelation, that the Sea ſhould be made dry Land, and the Waters be divided; yet he knew in groſs, that *The ſalvation of the Lord ſhould be ſeen that day, and that the* Ægyptians *whom they had ſeen that day, ſhould no more be ſeen again for ever.* Therefore the dividing the *Red-Sea* was a Miracle perform'd by *Moſes*, tho' he did not particularly foreſee it. But

when

when the Perſon, in behalf of whom a miraculous Work is brought about, is wholly ignorant of it; this can be no Miracle, nor ought any Conſequence to be drawn from it, as if that Perſon was immediately Commiſſion'd from God. The ſudden Advancement of Men from the loweſt Fortunes, to the higheſt Stations, by unaccountable and unforeſeen means, is ſometimes aſſuredly the immediate Hand of God: but ſince this Exaltation may be for the Ruin, as well as for the Happineſs of Mankind; and ſince the Party exalted could not foreſee his Succeſs, 'tis no Miracle, tho' it is wrought by a Divine Power; nor ought we to conclude, that this Perſon is a nearer Favourite of Heaven, than the reſt of Human kind. The Creation of a Reaſonable Soul is miraculous; but becauſe it is uſual, is not of that kind of Miracles expreſt in the Words. Thus the Inſpiration of Grace is miraculous; but becauſe it works now a-days according to the method of Reaſon and Diſcourſe (whatſoever the *Enthuſiaſts* may pretend to the contrary) aſſiſting us while we uſe ſuch moral Means, as Religion commands,

mands, and Reaſon preſcribes, it is not to be rang'd with the Miracles mention'd here.

Since Miracles therefore are the Effect of a Power more than Natural, it is juſt to enquire,

Secondly, What Power is capable of working a *Miracle*.

Where notwithſtanding what the acute *Le Clerc*, and others of this Age have advanc'd, That *Miracles* may be wrought by good or bad Angels, or by a Power leſs than Infinite; yet it may be laid down as a Concluſion, That infinite Power alone is capable of working a Miracle. For a Miracle proclaims an omnipotent Agent, and carries the Hand of God written upon it in bright Characters, legible to the moſt Vulgar Reaſon. For every true Miracle is a forming of ſomething out of nothing; and that either in the thing it ſelf, or in the manner of forming it. In the thing it ſelf, when it is of that ſort, that it cannot be form'd by any ſecond and ordinary Cauſes: As the Reſurrection of the Dead, the Re-union of the Soul and Body, the reſtoring of the Springs and

Jean le Clerc *de l'Incredulité. Lettre 2. p. 355.*

and Mechaniſm of Motion, after a total ſeparation. For Death is a Priſon, which ſurrenders back its Captives upon no other Summons below thoſe of the Almighty. To reſtore Life being only the Prerogative of him who gave it. Or a Miracle may conſiſt in forming ſomething out of nothing, as to the manner of doing it; when the thing lies within the power of ſecond Cauſes, yet is brought about without the aſſiſtance of any of them: As to cure Diſeaſes by a Word ſpeaking, or by touching the Hem of the Garment. Where there is ſomething which anſwers calling Light out of Darkneſs, and commanding every thing to be from nothing. Creation therefore being one of the peculiar Acts of God, and which we do not know that He ever communicated to a Creature; the Power of working Miracles, as to the original of it, muſt be ſo too: For only He who firſt form'd the Laws of Nature, can ſuſpend or alter them. 'Tis true, the Angels far ſurpaſs us in the excellency of their Faculties, and therefore may perform ſuch things, as are apt to raiſe Admiration in us, becauſe of our unacquaint-

quaintedness with the causes of them, or manner of their Production. Even the faln Angels themselves have not their Forces so much broken by Sin, but that by Lying Wonders they may easily impose on the Spectator's Eye; tho' 'tis wholly impossible for them, by any Power of their own, to alter the Course of Nature, or produce a real *Miracle*. So that if a *Miracle* has been wrought for the confirmation of any Doctrin, 'tis a sufficient warrant, that this Doctrin is of God. But since the evil Angels, who have assum'd the Person of God, may also counterfeit his wondrous Works, it will be necessary,

Thirdly, To enquire into some of those Marks, whereby a true *Miracle* may be distinguish'd from a false one. So that a difference may be put betwixt the Works of *God*, and those of his greatest Enemies.

The first Mark of a true *Miracle* is, That there should be sufficient Evidence that this *Miracle* has been wrought, and the Effect of it ought to be addrest to our Senses. For a *Miracle* it self, is not an object of our Belief, tho' it is

form'd in confirmation of ſomething, which we are oblig'd to believe: For then a *Miracle* would be as obſcure as the thing which it is produc'd to prove. And every *Miracle* would want another, to make it ſerviceable to its grand deſign.

The ſecond Mark of a true *Miracle* is, That it ought not to tend to the overthrowing of any Doctrin, before eſtabliſh'd by God, by ſufficient Miracles. For God cannot be divided againſt himſelf: But ſhould he overthrow that by Miracle, which he had before ſettled by Miracle, Eternal Truth would diſagree with himſelf. For Miracles, and a Doctrin, give mutual ſupport one to another; as Miracles declare the Doctrin to be true, ſo the purity and excellence of the Doctrin, confirm the Miracles to be Divine. But if there is an Inconſiſtency between the Miracles, and the Doctrin; the deciſion muſt be in favour of the Doctrin, in oppoſition to the Miracles. For if a Perſon acts the moſt wonderful Works, to give Sanction to a Religion, which contains low Idea's of God, or interferes with the great Duties, we owe to one another; his Miracles

racles are nothing but artful Frauds, and he himſelf only a more pompous Deceiver: So on the other hand, when Miracles are produc'd in favour of a Doctrin, which is pure and holy; whoſe proſpects of Rewards are only laid in a future State; which enjoins Modeſty, Temperance, Sobriety, and Patience, and whatſoever is fitted to advance Human Nature; ſuch a Doctrin is highly fitted to perſwade Men, that the Miracles wrought in behalf of it, are true.

The third Mark of a true *Miracle* is, That the Effects of it ought to be laſting and durable. If Diſeaſes are remov'd by a Miracle, they ought ſo to be remov'd, as not to return. If Sight is reſtor'd to the Blind, it ought not to be a temporary Reſtitution, but a permanent and continued ſtate of Seeing.

Fourthly, Miracles ought to be of that Nature, as to be capable of being extended over the whole Creation. For ſince they flow from an infinite Power, which has equal Juriſdiction over every Creature, they cannot be confin'd within any particular Circle of Beings. For whatſoever Creature the Voice of God is addreſt to, it immediately loſes its

Liberty, and can only perform what is his Pleasure.

There is a fifth Mark which commonly attends on a real Miracle, which tho' it does not fully convince, that the Miracle is true; yet it is a great recommendation of it to the Love and Admiration of Mankind; and is fitted to perswade us, That the Doctrin settled by it, is from above: That is, when a Miracle is wrought for the good of Mankind; to cure their Diseases, raise their Dead.

The sixth Mark of a true *Miracle* is, That it should not be wrought meerly for the Advantage, or Honour of the Performer; nor ought he to propose any Interest from it, but the good and happiness of Mankind. Where these Marks combine in any Miracle, we may securely vouch, That it is the Work of God; and that the Person who performs it, is Commission'd from Heaven, after an extraordinary manner. So that I shall proceed to shew,

Fourthly, That the Miracles performed by *Jesus Christ*, and therefore those wrought by his Apostles, have all these Marks of a true Miracle. And

And First, There was sufficient Evidence, That the Miracles of *Jesus Christ* were wrought. And first, There was Evidence sufficient to convince those, who flourish'd in the times in which the Miracles were wrought; and secondly, To satisfy us, who live in distant Ages. Those who were co-temporary with the Miracles, had not the least Umbrage from Reason, to doubt the truth of them. For they were wrought in publick, often in great Assemblies of People; generally upon notorious and inveterate Diseases and Maladies, in presence of the Enemies of Christianity: And in matters addrest to Sense, where every one has due Power, as well as Right to judge. Even the most implacable Adversaries, who saw and envied this growing Religion in its Infancy, could not deny, but that notable Miracles had been done by the Professors of it.

But, Secondly, There is sufficient Evidence to satisfy us, that these Miracles have been wrought. And this Evidence rises from the Sincerity of the primitive Believers, who were Eye-witnesses of these Miracles, and Recorders of them

to Poſterity: And who laid down their Lives, not only to give Sanction to the Doctrin of *Jeſus*; but to atteſt the truth of his Miracles, by which it was confirm'd. The Relations of theſe Perſons muſt be aſſuredly true, ſince they could propoſe no other Intereſt to themſelves, but the Propagation of Truth. All other ſiniſter aims were diſappointed by their Deaths, and their Reward was only to be hop'd for, in that glorious future State, of which they diſcours'd ſo much. Add to this, That the firſt Profeſſors of Chriſtianity always appeal'd to Miracles, and challeng'd the *Heathens* to bring their fancy'd Deities; aſſuring them, that they ſhould all be miraculouſly ſtruck dumb by the God of the *Chriſtians*; otherwiſe they offer'd themſelves to Death, as Enemies of the eſtabliſh'd Religion of their Country. The greateſt Enemies of Chriſtianity could not deny ſo manifeſt a matter, as the Miracles wrought by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and his Apoſtles. *Lucian*, the great Ridiculer of all Religion, freely owns it: For He, whom he blaſphemouſly ſtyles in his **Ariſton*, Τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς Παλαιστίνης σοφιστὴν, is undoubtedly our Saviour. This

* Φιλοψευδὴς ἢ Ἀπίστων, p. 363. *Edit. Ribitti.*

Jewiſh

Jewish Sophister, he tells us, cast out Devils, heal'd the Sick, rais'd the Dead.

Secondly, The Miracles of our Saviour did not tend to overthrow any Doctrin, before establish'd by God, by sufficient Miracles. For tho' the Civil and Judicial Laws of *Moses* fell shortly after our Saviour's Death, because they were only calculated for the Commonwealth of the *Jews*, and were dissolv'd with that Polity; yet we find that our Saviour, during his abode on Earth, did not in the least invalidate their Obligation; and was so far from teaching any thing contrary to the Obedience of them, that he was always prepar'd to practise them himself. As to the Ritual and Ceremonial Law, which was employ'd about Circumcision, and Purifications, and Sacrifices, in distinction of Meats, and Times, and various other Rites and Observances; this was not properly dissolv'd and made void by the coming of Christ, but fulfill'd and made good by him. The Rites and Ceremonies of this Law, were the Types and Resemblances of those future good things, which were promis'd under the Gospel: a kind of rude

Draught and Sciography of a more ſpiritual, refin'd and perfect Oeconomy, which was deſign'd, and at laſt finiſh'd and compleated by Chriſtianity. But while theſe Laws continued in force, our Saviour ſubmitted himſelf to them. He was Circumcis'd, and preſented in the Temple; and perform'd all other Rites, commanded by the Law of *Moſes*. He did not therefore work any Miracle, in oppoſition to theſe Laws, but they having remain'd as long as they were deſign'd to do, and there was any uſe of them, expir'd and abated of their own accord.

Thirdly, The Effects of our Saviour's Miracles were permanent. He did not ſuſpend only, but expel Diſeaſes: the Dead which he rais'd, had their Soul join'd to their Body by as firm an union, as when it was at firſt inſpir'd.

Fourthly, Our Saviour's Miracles were extended over the whole Creation: the Power of them was as large as the Circle of the World; nor were Hell and the Grave exempted from their Juriſdiction. The faln Angels, who rebell'd againſt God, were yet forc'd to ſubmit to him. And Death

and Diſeaſes were ſoften'd into Life and Health. The Winds and Seas were ſilent at his Voice; and *He ſtilled the raging of the Waters.* So that the general Obedience of all Nature, was a ſufficient Motive to perſwade, that it was the God of Nature who acted.

Fifthly, Our Saviour's Miracles bear that endearing Character, That they were wrought for the good of Mankind. For moſt of the Works of our Saviour were equally beneficial and miraculous. Even in the Prologue to his own Crucifixion, (his violent Attachment,) when one of his Enemies was wounded, he beſtow'd a Miracle to effect his cure. The Spirit of the Goſpel diſplay'd it ſelf in all that he did, as that of the Law in the Miracles of *Moſes*: As the latter were generally perform'd, to deſtroy and conſume; ſo thoſe of *Jeſus* wholly aim'd, to preſerve and ſave.

Laſtly, Our Saviour's Miracles were not deſign'd to gain himſelf Applauſe, Intereſt, or Honour: For he refus'd to be made a King. And tho' he was crown'd indeed, yet it was with Thorns alone: tho' he was Exalted, yet it

was

was only upon the Croſs, to be made a more conſpicuous Inſtance of Woe and Infamy. *He was deſpis'd and rejected of men; a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him: He was deſpis'd, and we eſteem'd him not.* As theſe Marks of a true Miracle agree to the Works of our Saviour, ſo do they to thoſe of the Apoſtles, and Primitive Believers. For theſe were only reſemblances, of what their Lord had done before; repetitions of his miraculous Acts, and therefore bear the ſame Marks and Signatures. *Phlegon*, free'd by the Emperor *Adrian*, mentions the Miracles of St. *Peter*, according to *Origen*, who liv'd near *Phlegon*'s time, and had read his Books then commonly extant; and therefore his Teſtimony muſt be as valid, as if we had the Originals. *Porphyry*, as ingenious, and as ſevere an Enemy as ever appear'd againſt our Religion, owns ſeveral Miracles to be perform'd by the firſt Chriſtians, in defence of their Worſhip. God therefore bore witneſs to their Doctrin, by thus wonderfully diſplaying of himſelf: their Doctrin therefore is true. For when Miracles are once

Contra *Celſum.*

vid. Cyrill. lib. 10. *againſt Julian.*

once brought to ſecond a Doctrin, theſe ſilence all my ſcruples; I yield, I am convinc'd: for God cannot exerciſe his own Power, or delegate it to any other, to give ſanction to a Lye, or honour an Impoſtor. But theſe Marks cannot agree with any Miracles, which were wrought in competition with our Saviour's. As for the Cures pretended to be perform'd by the Emperors, *Veſpaſian* and *Adrian*, as they are related by [a] *Suetonius*, [b] *Tacitus*, and [c] *Spartianus*; thoſe who reflect what different Artifices were about that time eſpecially, us'd to gain an eſteem of Divinity to the Emperors, will not much wonder, that ſuch reports ſhould be ſpread of them, or that Perſons ſhould counterfeit and imitate thoſe Diſeaſes deſcrib'd, to give themſelves out to be reliev'd by them: So that they fail againſt the firſt and principal Mark of a true Miracle, becauſe it is not evident that they were at all perform'd. For there ſeems to be no neceſſity for the Hypotheſis of *Grotius*, That *Veſpaſian* was endued from above with a Power of working Miracles, becauſe he was to be God's Miniſter of Vengeance againſt the *Jews*.

[a] *Cap. 7. in Veſpaſian.*
[b] *Hiſtor. l. 4. c. 81.*
[c] *12. p. Edit. Salmaſii.*

The

The next who appear'd after theſe, but who made a much greater Figure than they, was that famous Impoſtor *Apollonius Tyaneus*; but his Tranſactions want the greateſt part of the Notes of a true Miracle. For, *firſt*, They are feign'd to be done in private, and therefore what reaſon have we to believe that they were done at all? *Secondly*, The Perſon who gives an account of him (*Philoſtratus*) liv'd above an hundred Years after him. *3ly*, All his Miracles are only falſe Tranſcripts of our Saviour's, with all ſubmiſſion to a late famous Author, who has aſſerted the contrary. Thus becauſe *Jeſus Chriſt* was the Son of God, *Apollonius* is fancy'd to be ſo too: Becauſe Angels proclaim'd our Saviour's Birth, a parallel Miracle is advanc'd in favour of *Apollonius*: Becauſe our Saviour was forſaken by his Diſciples, *Apollonius* is deſerted by his Scholars: Becauſe our Saviour was accus'd before *Pilate*, *Apollonius* is impeach'd before *Domitian*: Becauſe our Saviour converſt with his Diſciples after his Reſurrection, *Apollonius* alſo appears after his Death, to a certain Young man, and gives him an account of a future State, about

Bp. *Parker* of the Law of Nature, *p.* 296.

about which he was extremely curious: Because our Saviour ascended into Heaven, there was also a Voice heard, inviting *Apollonius* into Bliss: στεῖχε, γᾶς στεῖχε, ἐς οὐρανὸν στεῖχε. Thus all other workers of Miracles, who ever have made any opposition to our Saviour, cannot produce these Marks of a true and just Miracle; and therefore their Doctrins are not of God, nor are they to be look'd upon as Prophets. So that I shall proceed to shew,

Philost. lib. 8. cap. 12.

Lastly, That tho' Christianity was at first establish'd by *Miracles*, yet that there is no reason why we should expect a continued succession of them to the present Times.

For it is unreasonable to expect that God should work a Miracle, where the End may be accomplish'd without one. This would be to make Miracles too vulgar and despicable. For a thing often seen, how excellent soever it is, yet ceasing thereby to be new, it ceases also to be admir'd. For 'tis not the worth or excellence of an Object, which draws the eyes and wonder of Men after it. For can any thing be imagin'd more

august

auguſt and beautiful, than the Sun in its full light and glory; and yet how many more Spectators and Wonderers does the ſame Sun find, under the veil of an Eclipſe? Miracles continued in the Chriſtian Church, till the Chriſtian Religion, had receiv'd its ſettlement from them, in a great meaſure; and ſhould God call Perſons to convert Infidels, he might perhaps employ this extraordinary Method again. Tho' ſince Chriſtianity is fully eſtabliſh'd, 'tis more likely that he might accompliſh this grand Deſign, by the inviſible workings of his Grace, upon the Hearts of the Unconverted; by inclining and moving them within, and by ſome extraordinary Providences without. And this may give us reaſon to ſuſpect ſome of St. *Xavier*'s, and the *Indian* Miſſionary's Miracles.

vid. *Xaverii Epiſt.* lib. 3. Epiſt. 4. &c.

Obj. As to the preſent Objections of the *Deiſts*, which they propoſe in this form, That if God had reaſon to work Miracles in former times, there is alſo reaſon why he ſhould form them at preſent; ſince the ſame Spirit of Unbelief prevails and flouriſhes now, as much as it did when Miracles were wrought:

wrought: And therefore God is oblig'd to work Miracles in favour of those who question Religion now, as he did in behalf of them, who liv'd in the times of *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles.

To this it may be reply'd, That the Proofs which we have of the ancient Miracles, are convincing to us, as well as to them before whom they were visibly wrought; nay, there is this to be said in favour of the ancient Miracles, That they have undergone the Test of Time, and have been discuss'd in most Ages, thro' which they have past, and yet no flaw is found in them; which cannot be said of modern Miracles, if they could be had: And therefore, on this account, they carry a greater ground of Credibility. But we may remark farther, That those who may justly demand new Miracles, ought to have made good use of those means, which God had before display'd, to manifest his Truth. They ought, without Bias's or Passion, to have examin'd the Revelation of the New Testament. They ought to be adorn'd with all those Virtues, which they themselves own to be perfective of their Natures, and *Resp.*

just

juſt Qualifications of a pure and generous *Deiſt*. They ought to be truly humble and ſubmiſſive, to whatſoever bears the reſemblance of Divine Revelation; and if they have not theſe Excellencies, which the Light of Nature, and their own magnify'd *Deiſm* it ſelf, prove ſo extremely neceſſary; how can they expect that God ſhould make freſh diſcoveries to them, by new Miracles? But granting that God ſhould condeſcend ſo far, as to work Miracles in their favour, there is the greateſt reaſon to believe, that they would find colluſions and pretences, to continue ſtill in their Unbelief; ſince they have invented ways to evade thoſe of our Saviour, granting that the Matters of Fact were true. And it is very remarkable, That tho' nothing could be more bright and convincing than the Miracles of our Saviour, yet the *Jews* ſtill found out reaſons to break the Force, and avoid the Evidence of them. And are the *Sceptick*s and *Deiſts* of our Age leſs furniſht with Sophiſtry, or better prepar'd to entertain Religion? Does not the ſame diſpoſition of Heart, ſo contrary to the Chriſtian Religion; Do not the ſame

Pride,

Pride, Prejudices, and Negligence prevail amongst them, which did amongst the *Jews*? Is God therefore oblig'd to humour their unreasonable Desires, or run the hazard of having his wondrous Works expos'd to their Censures, Criticisms, and captious Enquiries? At this rate, God would be engag'd to work a Miracle, as often as any Man should arrive at Impiety high enough to doubt of his Religion, and to receive prophane Sentiments into his Breast. At this rate, why ought not Sin and Unbelief to abound, that Grace might much more abound? But further, Is not the System of *Deism* so contriv'd, as quite to preclude the working of a Miracle? For if *God* is Material, as Mr. *Hobbs* pretends, and so not distinct from the World; or if *God* and *Nature* are the same, as *Spinosa* (the great Apostle of *Deism*) asserts, there can be no such thing as a Miracle. Tho' an Event may be strange and uncommon, yet it must be natural still; since *God* and *Nature* being the same, what is wrought by the former, is also wrought by the latter. Why therefore do they demand such Proofs, which they themselves

v. Leviath. de Regno Tenebrarum.

vid. Tractatum Theologico-Politicum, p. 100; & Passim. as also in his Opera Posthuma: and Blunt's Anima Mundi.

ſelves vouch, cannot be given?

But to cloſe all: We have not only *Moſes* and the *Prophets*, but a greater than *Moſes*, the Holy *JESUS*, and his *Apoſtles*; if we hear not them, neither will we be perſwaded if the greateſt Miracle ſhould be wrought, and even one ſhould riſe from the Dead. The Miracles therefore of Religion are wiſely adapted to convince us of the truth of it; and we our ſelves may be highly ſerviceable, to perſwade Unbelievers of the force of Religion, if we will ſuffer it to work one great and comprehenſive Miracle on us; that is, to reform our Lives, by compoſing the unruly motions of our Souls, by cooling the irregular warmth of our Affections; and by charming all our Paſſions into ſo ſedate a Peace, as to be ſubmiſſive to the Rules of the Chriſtian Religion: which is greater than to ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and Angels. Then ſhall we bring Honour to our holy Religion, and be duly prepar'd to expect the laſt and finiſhing Miracle of it; that is, that our *Corruptible* may *put on Incorruption*, and our *Mortal Immortality*.

A DISCOURSE

Shewing

That the Moral Law of Moſes, is the ſame with that of CHRIST: *againſt the* Racovian Catechiſm, *and others.*

LUK. Chap. X. ver. 25, 28.

A certain Lawyer ſtood up and tempted him, ſaying, Maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit Eternall Life? He ſaid unto him, What is written in the Law? How readeſt thou?

THE peculiar method by which our Saviour deliver'd his Doctrin; the tendency of it to a greater meaſure of Piety, than was commonly taught by the moſt extraordinary Doctors of thoſe times; the ratifying of his Divine Commiſſion, by a train of unqueſtion-

able Miracles, which were not only ſuited for the conviction, but alſo at the ſame time adapted to the uſe and ſervice of Mankind; and all theſe grac'd with the moſt unblameable Converſation (that never was) had rais'd the Love of the greateſt part of his Auditors; the Envy of ſome, the Wonder and Curioſity of all. Of this number (whether mov'd by Envy or Curioſity alone, but moſt likely principally by the former) a Lawyer, one who was throughly vers'd in the moſt refin'd Niceties of the Jewiſh Law, came to try what his Judgment was about the Law, or Rule of Life; deſigning probably to diſcover, whether he would advance any thing contrary, either to the Law, or the receiv'd Traditions, that ſo he might make him obnoxious to the Penalty of that Law, whoſe Sanctions he ſhould diſhonour by his Innovations. The Enquiry which he propoſes to him, is one of the greateſt importance, and in whoſe Reſolution the moſt momentous Intereſt is concern'd: namely, What was neceſſary to be obſerv'd for the attaining that *Eternal Life*, which Chriſt promis'd in a clearer manner, than had been

been display'd by the Law and the Prophets. The Enquirer, no doubt, was expecting a ſyſtem of new Precepts, the addition of a Table unknown to *Moſes*; at leaſt that the old ones ſhould be extended to freſh Duties, and new Obligations. And no queſtion but that he was highly ſurpriz'd, when our Saviour informs him, That the Law of *Moſes* and the Prophets, was a true and adequate ſtandard of Duty, and the living up to it, the ſole way to Salvation. That tho' the Law of Ordinances and Ceremonies obliged none but the *Jews*; yet that the *Moral Law*, as it was the Reaſon, ſo it ſhould be the ſtanding Religion of all Mankind. That what was indiſpenſably requir'd to Salvation before the coming of the *Meſſias*, ſhould, as to the Subſtance of it, be ſo after; nor any other Duty ſuperinduc'd. For the Law, as ariſing from the nature and relations of Things and Perſons, and as marking out the boundaries of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, which are always in the main the ſame, was uncapable of Change, Addition, or new Interpretation; was ſtill to be read and practic'd, agreeably to its genuine and

original Sence. And that the Saviour of the World, during the term of his abode in it, had no other Authority but to walk suitable to its Commands, and to reconcile for the Affronts which had been put upon its Divine Author, by Mankinds disobedience of it.

A certain Lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, What shall I do to inherit Eternal Life? He said unto him, What is written in the Law? How readest thou?

From the Words, taken in relation to the purport of the Lawyer's Question; a preparation to which Answer is made in those our Saviour's other Questions, *What is written in the Law?* and, *How readest thou?* but fully compleated in that Injunction of our Saviour's upon the reading of the Law, in the words after the Text, *Do this and live*: From the Words thus taken, I conclude, That as our Saviour did not invalidate any Commands of the Law; so on the other hand, that nothing was made a Duty, or absolutely needful to the gaining of *Eternal Life*, but what was so under the Old Testament, before his coming; otherwise he had been oblig'd

to have inform'd the Lawyer of these new Terms of Salvation, and not to have refer'd him to the Law, and what was to be read in it. He did not therefore new extend the old Commands, or impose new ones: he introduc'd no new Religion into the World, nor even material Circumstances of it; the Will of God as it was reveal'd to Man, being of that kind, that it is as unchangeable as his own glorious Nature; and the way to Heaven as much one, as that ever-blessed and holy *GOD*, whose enjoyment makes up the Bliss of that happy State. This Conclusion, drawn from the design of the Words, I shall endeavour to prove, by shewing,

First, That it was inconsistent with the Character which our Saviour should bear, to exercise such Legislative Power, as to give New Commands, or new extension to the Old ones.

Secondly, That the *Moral Law* in its own nature was incapable of receiving an addition of New Commands, or of having the Old ones extended to New Duties.

Thirdly, That as it was inconsistent with our Saviour under that Character

which he bore; and as there was this incapacity in the Law; so That he never attempted to do what was both thus against the Nature of the Thing, and besides his own Character, to extend the Old Commands, or impose New ones.

Fourthly, That as our Saviour has not added any thing to the Law, so neither has he taken any thing from it; nor is there any Priviledge in the *Gospel*, which makes void any of the Commands of God before given.

Lastly, I shall briefly reflect on the Encouragement that there is to observe the divine Commands, because their observance shall be rewarded with *Eternal Life*, as it is styl'd by our Saviour.

The three first of these Positions are quite contrary to the Doctrin taught by *Smalcius*, or whosoever else was the Author of the *Racovian Catechism*, and to the generality of the *Unitarian Divines*; nay and even to some of great Name amongst our selves, who, in some things, seem too favourable to their Opinions; who affirm, That it was agreeable to our Saviour's Character, to make

Racov. Cat. p. 101. &c.

Bp. Taylor's Ductor Dubitant. pag. 242, &c. Rule 4. Edit. 1696. Forbes, and others.

make additions to the Law, and that the Law was qualify'd to receive 'em; and that he did not only extend the Mosaick Commands to new Duties, but also made the Appendage of several Commands of his own. Such are the Commands of *Self-denial, taking up the Cross*, or *Patience under Misery and Death, the following of Christ*; to which Duties, they say, there was no obligation before Christianity. In opposition to whom, I shall endeavour to prove,

First, That it was inconsistent with that Character which our Saviour should bear, to exercise any such Legislative Power, as to give new Commands, or new extension to the old ones.

By the Virtue of his Character, our Saviour does not so much as assume Authority, to displace the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* from *Moses*'s Chair, or to weaken that power which they had gain'd over the People; tho' he well knew how unjust their Pretensions were both to the one, and the other: so far is he from publishing any thing, but what might reasonably be spoken from the Chair of *Moses*, and suitably to his

Sence.

Sence. *The Scribes and Pharisees*, says he, *sit in Moses's seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe and do, that observe and do.* 'Tis true, he divests the Law, as was fit, of those artificial Traditions, which, instead of strengthning, did (in his unerring Judgment) make it void. He drew off that Veil from its Face, which their Doctor's Interpretations had put on it; and shew'd the *beauty of its Holiness*, in its full lustre. But he does not, that we find, add any thing to it; and as *He came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets*, so neither came he to make any New Law of his own. For the Character which he sustain'd, was indeed unqualify'd for such an Office; because he did not appear in the Person of a Law-giver, to give New Laws, but in that of a Mediator, being at once the Priest and the Sacrifice, to atone for our breaches of the old; to free us from the Curse which we had contracted by them, and to be made a Curse for us, that he might redeem us from the Curse of the Law. For this is one of the great differences between *Moses* and *Christ*, That the former was to make Laws, and by the

force

force of them, to accuse and condemn the Disobedient; whereas *Jesus Christ* came only to pardon, absolve and reconcile. *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father,* (says he to the opposing *Jews*,) *there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom you trust:* The reason is, because *God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World*, or indeed to execute any other branch of Judicial or Legislative Jurisdiction; but *that through him the World might be saved.* For *the Law*, the Rule of Practice and Obedience, *was given by Moses*; *but Grace*, the Dispensation of Pardon and Reconcilement to the Penitent, *and Truth*, the Fulfilling of the Types of the Law, *came by Jesus Christ.* The appearance of a *man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*, was too inglorious for a divine Law-giver to assume; and Laws would but receive small force from him, who *was despis'd and rejected of men.* So that he was only to live, suffer, and die suitably to the Law, a Pattern of unmatch'd Innocence and Virtue: to fulfil it, not to add to it. And indeed it was absolutely unnecessary, that our Saviour should be invested with the Power of

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adding any thing to the Law: For,

Secondly, The *Moral Law* in its own nature was incapable of receiving an addition of New Commands, or of having the Old ones extended to New Duties.

The Psalmist tells us, *The Law of God is perfect*; and there is reason that it should be so, if we consider, that the sources of Good and Evil are not chiefly laid in any positive Injunction of God, with a design to try Man's Obedience, (as* some have fancy'd) but in the order and dependance of things themselves, which are always in the principal the same. We must therefore conclude, that this Law, which is the Rule of this Good or Evil, must be always the same too; and therefore when it began to be a Law, or a measure of this Good or Evil, it must be as perfect as it is at present; because what is now Good or Evil, was always Good or Evil. Farther, If we survey the compass and latitude of that Holiness, Sanctity, and Perfection which were commanded by the Law; we may find, that it was not an imperfect Holiness which might be dis-

* *Sunt qui nullam præceptorum causamque-runt, sed dicunt omnia solam Dei Voluntatem sequi.* Maimonides, *Mor. Nov. p. 3. c. 26.*

diſpens'd with in ſome points; but was to be a compleat, univerſal Holineſs, inconſiſtent either with the leaſt Sin, or the want of the leaſt Virtue; was to be like their *Sacrifices*, not only *without ſpot, and blemiſh*, but alſo perfect in every part: for, *Be ye holy as I am holy*, ſays God. The Holineſs of the Divine Nature was to be the meaſure of their Holineſs; and ſince no Law could enjoin any thing which tended to a greater Holineſs than this, it follows, That no Law could be ſuperadded to this, nor the Law which exacts ſuch Holineſs be extended to any other Duties: the Law was then incapable of receiving an addition of New Commands, or of having the Old ones extended to New Duties.

Thirdly, Our Saviour did not attempt to do what was both thus againſt the Nature of the Thing, and beſides his own Character, to extend the Old Commands, or impoſe New ones.

He did not new extend the Old Commands; he did not reach them out to New Duties, which they did not inforce before. And this may be made out from

a ſhort view of the divine Commands, and the meaſure of their Obligation, as they were given by *Moſes*, and explain'd by him and the ſucceeding Prophets. And in the firſt place, the Duties of the firſt Table, which regard God, were advanc'd to the higheſt pitch before our Saviour's coming; neither did the firſt Command of *having no other Gods before the true one*, receive any addition by divine Worſhip being paid to our Saviour; becauſe he is *God of the ſame Nature with the Father, God over all, God bleſſed for ever.* The object of divine Worſhip was not multiply'd by Worſhip given to him; becauſe *He and the Father are One.* The ſecond, third and fourth Commands were obſerv'd by the *Jews*, even to the greateſt Superſtition; to the thinking that their exactneſs in their Duties towards God, might atone for the omiſſion of their Duties towards their Neighbour; and that the abundance of their Sacrifices, join'd with their Zeal for the *Worſhip, the Name of God, and his Day*, might excuſe for their want of *Mercy, Charity*, and *Compaſſion*: So that our Saviour rather ſeems to regulate their miſtaken Zeal on this Head, to try

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to make their Social Virtues consistent with their Religious, than to have added any thing New. The *Pharisees* indeed had perverted the design of the fifth Commandment, by teaching the lawfulness of defrauding Parents of what was due to them, by a consecrating it to God; yet this is not the intent of *Moses*, who seems to be more particularly careful for the keeping of this Command, in its utmost extent, than for any of the rest, by annexing the promise of *long life in the land which the Lord their God should give them.* But the great difference lies in the five last Commands of the second Table: and here our Adversary, the *Racovian Catechist*, says, *That the Command against Murder was enlarg'd by our Saviour, to the forbidding of all kind of Anger and Revenge, That against Adultery, to the restraining all impure Desires. That the Command against Theft was extended to the restraining all Avarice. That against false Witness, to Detraction. That against Coveting, to the curbing every Inclination after what was unlawful, how unlikely soever to break out into act; which Anger, Revenge, impure Desires, Avarice, Detraction, and evil Inclina-*

Racov. Cat. p. 127.

p. 129.

p. 130.

p. 133.

Ibid.

Edit Racov. An. 1609. and dedicated to King James I.

clinations, were under no Prohibition from the Laws which Moſes and the Prophets receiv'd from God. But the contrary to this will appear, if we conſider in the firſt place, that our Saviour has laid no new reſtraint on *Anger* and *Revenge*: for moderate *Anger* is no more oppos'd to the mild and gentle Spirit of the Goſpel, than it is to the more rough Diſpenſation of the Law. *Be ye angry and ſin not*, is the Apoſtle's direction to manage this Paſſion; which ſhews that it ought to be govern'd, not deſtroy'd; and that it is criminal, not in its Nature, but its Exceſs. But immoderate Anger, ſpringing from a deſire of Revenge, is as much againſt the Morality of the Law, as of the Goſpel. Or elſe why ſhould the Pſalmiſt adviſe to *ceaſe from Anger, and forſake Wrath?* or why ſhould *Solomon* deſcribe *Anger as outragious, and Wrath as cruel?* why as only *reſting in the boſom of Fools*, if there was no inconformity in it with the divine Law?

As to *Revenge:* Private was as unlawful before the Goſpel, as under it. *Thou ſhalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge againſt the children of thy people*, was God's Law by *Moſes*; and no more is his Law

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by Christ: But as for Publick *Revenge*, by the Sword of the Magistrate, it is as much allow'd by the latter, as by the former; for the Magistrate under the Gospel too is *a Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath on him that does evil.*

Secondly, All *Impure Desires* are directly against the last Command, *Thou shalt not Covet*; where all evil Desires or Coverings in general are condemn'd. But what other measure can there be of the Evilness of any Desire, but the Illness of the Action, to which it tends? And what other Rule can there be given of the Sinfulness of any Imagination, than that *when it has conceiv'd, 'twill most certainly bring forth Sin?*

Thirdly, *Avarice* was criminal before the Gospel, as well as under it; and therefore cannot derive its Sinfulness from any subsequent Institution of our Saviour's. For the Prophet *Amos* pronounces a *Wo to him that Covets*; and *David* prays that *God would incline his heart to his Testimonies, and not to Covetousness*; pointing at the irreconcileableness of the latter with the former.

Fourthly, *Detraction* was made equally Victorious by the Mosaick, as by the Christian Oeconomy. For the Psalmist makes it the loathing stroke in the Character of the Wicked, That *he sits and speaks against his Brother, and slanders his own Mother's Son.* And lest it might be thought in this Case, that the nearness of the Person against whom the Offence was committed, was the only Reason which made it a Sin; *Solomon* imposes a general Restraint on all *Detraction*, against whomsoever practic'd: *Put away far from Thee a froward Mouth, and perverse Lips put far from Thee.*

Lastly, That all *Evil Inclinations*, not only impure ones, but from whatsoever Cause they deriv'd their Malignity, were forbidden by the Law, was before shewn. So that from this short View of the Divine Commands, and the Measure of their Obligation, both before and under the Gospel, we may conclude, That our Saviour did not now extend the Old Commands, did not reach them out to fresh Duties, which they did not enforce before; did not make any Novel Prohibition (as is imagin'd) against *Anger* or *Revenge*, *Impure*

Defires, Envies, Detraction or *Evil Inclinations*; but left these Vices in the State in which he found them: prov'd guilty indeed by the Verdict of Reason and Natural Conscience, but fully condemn'd by the Sentence of God, pronounc'd by *Moses* and his Holy Prophets.

As our Saviour did not new extend the Old Commands, so neither farther did He impose any New ones of his own. But here our *Casuists* affirm, that our Saviour did enjoin several New Commands of his own: as the Command of *Denying our selves*, or *plucking out our right Eye*, and *cutting off our right Hand*, of *taking up the Cross*, and of *following Christ*. But these were Duties before the Gospel, *before the Day-spring from on high had visited us*, in the Substance, tho' not in every Circumstance, Branch and Punctilio of them. For tho' 'tis improper to say, That the *following of our Saviour* was a Duty before this Saviour appear'd on the Earth, who should thus be follow'd before He had led a Life of compleat Virtue and Innocence, which should be an Example to all his Followers; yet that *Resigna-*

tion to the Will of God, that *perfect Charity towards Mankind*, that *Humility and Perseverance in Fasting and Prayer*, which our Adversaries make so peculiarly imitable in our Saviour, were obligatory before they were thus practic'd and enforc'd by Him. And this will appear by a brief, yet particular, Examination of each one of them.

And in the first place; *Self-Denial*, which is nothing else but that Virtue by which we renounce our own Will, and all its carnal Desires, and conform them to the Will of God, equally oblig'd under the Old Testament, as under the New. For did not the former as well as the latter, exact a perfect Love of God? A Love exerted *with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Might*. A Love in some proportion worthy that Divine Object to which it was addrest, and that oblig'd Creature who paid it. But could so pure a Love as this be offer'd, unless the Offerer renounc'd his own Will, and all its carnal Desires, and wholly submitted them to the Will of God? since all Love of the World, and whatsoever belongs to the carnal Mind, is Enmity to God: every

sinful Desire entertain'd in an Heart consecrated to the Almighty, making the whole Sacrifice an Abomination in his sight. So that since a perfect Love of God was commanded by the Old Testament, and this could not be given without a compleat Self-denial; every Religious Votary under that Dispensation, as well as under the Gospel, was oblig'd to deny himself, to renounce all his carnal Desires, that he might love God with a more inflam'd Affection, a more passionate Devotion. So that the Command of *Self-denial* was no New Command of our Saviour's, but one of those which were deliver'd to the *Fathers*; and upon the Observation of which, the God of their Fathers promis'd to *Increase them mightily in the Land, which flowed with Milk and Honey.*

Secondly, The *taking up the Cross*, that is, a Preparedness to endure any Misery for the Name of God, and Constancy in his Holy Religion; nay, which is the greatest Tryal of an unshaken Courage, a Readiness to suffer even Death it self; which tho it is the shortest, yet is the most dismal of all Miseries: A Disposition to undergo

these, which is meant by *taking up the Cross*, was a Duty which oblig'd under the Ritual Law, as well as since its Abrogation. 'Tis true indeed, Christianity at its first rise seems to be a Religion purely made up of Sufferings. The Prospect was wholly dark and melancholy. Its Professors, as well as its Founder, *pour'd out their Souls to Death, and were number'd with Transgressors*; shar'd with him in the Agonies of a violent, and the Shame of a disgraceful Dissolution. Tho' the Duty of *taking up the Cross*, was thus vigorously put in practice by the first Christians, yet did it not then begin to oblige, but was a Duty in force under the Law, and strictly kept by its Religious Observers: *Some of which* (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* tells us) *were Tortur'd, not accepting Deliverance; others had Tryals of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, of Bonds and Imprisonments; were Ston'd, were Sawn asunder, were Tempted*, (or as others read it, with perhaps an apter connexion with the Context, [illegible], were Burnt,) *were slain with the Sword.*

Thirdly, The *following of Christ*, that is, a conforming our Lives to the Life

of Christ, or a resembling him in those Virtues which are properly his; not known, as our Opposers say, before He taught and practic'd them: Such are a *Resignation to the Will of God, perfect Charity, Humility and Perseverance in Fasting and Prayer.* But these were Duties before they were thus practic'd or enforc'd by our Saviour. For what greater Obligation could there be to a *Resignation to the Will of God*, than that Command of the Prophet, *Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength?* What greater Assistance could be given to *perfect Charity*, than that passionate Expostulation of *Moses*, upon God's being angry with the *Israelites* for the Molten Calf: *Now* (says he) *if thou will forgive their Sin: if not; blot me, I pray thee, out of the Book that thou hast written.* It seems to rise up to St. *Paul's* pathetical Wish under the Gospel: *I could wish that my self were accursed from Christ for my Brethren, my Kinsmen according to the Flesh.* As for *Humility*, it was a Duty before the Gospel; for the Prophet *Micah* commands us to *walk Humbly with our God*, as well as to *do Justly, and love*

Mercy. *Fasting* and *Prayer*, and *Perseverance* in them, were Duties antecedent to the Gospel; for we find that our Saviour does not so much settle any New Commands about them, as remove those Mistakes which were risen concerning them. He supposes that *to Pray* was a Duty; but his Direction is, *Not to pray as the Hypocrites do*. He supposes *Fasting* to be a Duty; but his Injunction is, *Not to disfigure the Face, that we may appear to Men to Fast*. So that He does not enjoin the Duties, which were commanded before, only corrects the Errors, which are frequent in the Practice of them: So that we may hence conclude, That our Saviour has appointed no New Commands of his own; only explain'd the Old ones of the Law, and press'd Mankind to the practice of them, as of Truths in which, through his Merits, Eternal Life is contain'd.

But before I proceed to the next Subject of our Enquiry, I shall make this remark on what has been already offer'd: That it is far from the Design of this Discourse, to depreciate the *Moral Law* of Christ. The whole aim of it is, to set it in a just Light, to shew that it is

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a necessary and eternal Law; such a Law, as when God ever impos'd any Law on his Creatures, was the most suitable for him to enact, and for them to obey. Such a Law, as I had almost said, the Rectitude of his own Nature laid him under a necessity of establishing; according to the Order in which He had form'd the Reasonable World. And this may obviate several of those loose Notions, which have been of late started by Ingenious Persons: *That Virtue and Vice, Good and Evil, are laid on the Opinions and Idea's of Men, or settled by some positive Injunction of the Magistrate, and therefore variable with the Clime, Nation, Season or Place, rather than arising from the Nature and Relation of Things.*

And this Perfection of the *Moral Law* receives farther Advantage from the following * Discourse, where is prov'd, That the *Moral Law* obliges in Heaven: an Hypothesis which has been little touch'd on, and which deserves to be recommended to better Hands, to be manag'd up to its due Worth.

But to return: As our Saviour did not thus impose more than what was com-

* *See the next Discourse on St. Matthew* VI. *ver.* 10.

commanded by the *Moral Law*; so it was very far distant from the Design of the Gospel, to exact less than what was written in the Law. He did not make void any of the Commands of the Law, nor warrant any Action that was not authoriz'd by it in its most strict Circumstances, whatsoever the *Antinomians* and *Libertines* say. For

Fourthly, There is no Privilege in the Gospel, which makes void any of the Commands of God before given.

Because all Duties (notwithstanding the wild Fancies of the *Antinomians*) are equally Enjoin'd under the Gospel, as they were under the Law, and every Conscience oblig'd to a Performance of them. By all Duties, I mean, (as in the former parts of the Discourse) things which the Holy Men of God perform'd in order to the attaining of Eternal Life. Was Faith requir'd under the Law, and was *Abraham* Justified by that? So must we under the Gospel; for *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. Were good Works requir'd under the Law? So are they under the Gospel too; for *our Light must so shine before*

before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven. Were a clean Heart, and pure Hands necessary under the Law; and are they not also under the Gospel? For is there not a Blessing pronounc'd to *the pure in Heart*, and are not they the Persons, *that shall see God?* Are not the Impure and Unclean those Accurs'd Ones, who, without true Repentance, must never see Him, never inherit any Blessing with Him? And in order to qualify us for this Beatifick Vision, the Apostle is very urgent, *Cleanse your Hands ye Sinners, and purify your Hearts ye Double-minded.* And so concerning all other Duties and substantial Requisites of the Law, which, excepting the Ceremonies of it, are all in force under the Gospel. And tho' we have no Burnt-Offerings upon our Altars, as the *Jews* had under the Law, yet have we not Souls and Bodies, which must be offer'd up to God as *a lively Sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable Service?* Instead of Hecatombs, are we not to render up the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, the *Calves of our Lips*, not of our Folds? and in lieu of a

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Propitiatory Oblation, are we not commanded to *do good and distribute, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased?* And assuredly we have the greatest Encouragement to this Observance of the Divine Commands; because,

Fifthly, This Observance shall be rewarded with *Eternal Life*, as it is stylʼd by our Saviour.

This Reward surely surpasses all the Hardships of our Duty, in keeping the Commands of God; as will fully appear, if we briefly reflect on what is meant by *Eternal Life*. This Life shall cause the noblest Changes in both the Parts of the Saints. Their Bodies shall be transform'd into *Spiritual and incorruptible Bodies, fashioned like to the glorious Body of the Son of God.* Their Souls shall be highly exalted to the utmost Perfection, in all their Parts and Faculties. Their Understandings shall be rais'd to the utmost Capacity, and that Capacity compleatly fill'd: *Now we see thro' a Glass darkly, but then Face to Face; now we know in part, then shall we know even as we are known*: for when God shall appear, we shall be like Him,

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for *we ſhall ſee him as He is*, in all his Robes of Glory. In this Life, the Wills of the Bleſſed ſhall be perfected with abſolute and indefective Holineſs, an exact conformity with the Will of God, and a perfect liberty from the Slavery of Sin. In this Life, their Affections ſhall be ſet to an unalterable Regularity, and that Regularity ſhall receive abſolute Satisfaction. And as their inward Happineſs ſhall be thus great, ſo ſhall their outward Condition be anſwerable; freed from all Pain, Miſery, Labour and Want; bleſt with an Impoſſibility of ſinning and offending God any more; full of Joy and Complacency in the Viſion of God. This is that Life. *Thus ſhall it be done to the Man whom God delights to honour*; to thoſe who have honour'd him on Earth, by keeping his Holy Laws, which are of Eternal Obligation. But that which makes up the Perfection of their Happineſs, is, That this their Life ſhall be Eternal, and there ſhall be no fear nor ſuſpicion that it ſhall ever end; *For whoſoever liveth and believeth in Chriſt, ſhall never die; whoſoever keeps his ſayings, ſhall never ſee Death.*

A DIS-

DISCOURSE

PROVING

That the Celestial Law *is the same with the* Moral, *or That the* Moral Law *is a Rule for the* Angels *and* Saints *to act by in Heaven; being a Sequel of the former Discourse.*

St. MAT. VI. ver. 10.

In Earth as it is in Heaven.

WHich Words, as they are a Part of our Saviour's divine and matchless Prayer, are a Parallel between the Performance of God's Will *in Heaven*, and the Manner by which it ought to be comply'd with on

on *Earth*. The Will, the doing of which is petition'd for, is the Will of God's Commands, and not (as some imagine) of his Decrees or Providential Dispensations; only as far as that may be discover'd to be a part of the Will of his Commands. For the State of the Blessed, who are here recommended as a Pattern to us, is too happy to leave place for afflictive Providences, which are the only Tryals of any one's Compliance with the Will of God's Decrees. The Performers of God's Will in *Heaven*, who are set forth as a Model to us *on Earth*, are not the Persons of the Ever-blessed Trinity: for God is not the Doer of that Will, the Doing whereof we are to pray that ours may resemble; because, however a Superior may lay his Injunctions upon another, yet he cannot, because he is no other than the Person enjoyning, lay any Injunction upon himself: as God cannot be looked upon as the Doer of that Will, the Doing whereof we are taught to pray that ours may be conform'd with; so neither can we look upon the Heavenly Bodies, the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, as such, which some (tho'

* As *Lightfoot* in his *Hor. Hebr.* seems to affirm.

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unwarily enough) have fancy'd to be here intended: Because tho' these Heavenly Bodies are subject to His Controul, as all other Creatures of God are, yet are they not in any capacity of paying Obedience to his Commands, inasmuch as they neither have any Knowledge of God's Commands, nor any freedom of Will to comply with them, tho' they had. From hence it follows, that we must look out for other Agents, as the Doers of the Divine Will, here spoken of: so that it is indispensably necessary to resolve the * Holy Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, to be they. Those who ought to be Actors of God's Will *in Earth*, and ought to follow the Doing of it *in Heaven*, are Men, who are the only Beings on Earth capable of a reasonable Compliance with it: those who are strangers to that Will and Kingdom, as well as those who are acquainted with it, and are Parts of it. So that the force of the Words is this, That the Holy Angels, and Blessed Saints are a just Pattern, and an adequate Model for Man to form his Obedience upon; insomuch that the Perfection or Imperfection

* Καθάπερ ἐν θρόνοις καὶ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις καὶ πάσῃ τῇ ὑπερκοσμίῳ δυνάμει γίνεται τὸ θέλημα. *Nyssen in Orat. Dom Serm. 50.*

section of Man's Obedience may be duly measur'd by its approach to, or distance from that of the Saints and Angels. To clear which Assertion, I shall *First*, Shew that the Obedience of the Blessed is a just Rule for our Obedience, as to the *Matter* about which it is employ'd; because that their Duties one towards another, and their Religious Worship towards God, as to the main and substance of them, are the same with what we are oblig'd to.

Secondly, That their Obedience, as to the *Manner*, *Method* and *Circumstances* of performing them, are the same with what we ought to do. So that the Divine Will perform'd *in Heaven*, is a just Standard for the performing it *in Earth*. And

First, That the Obedience of the Blessed is a just Rule for our Obedience, as to the *Matter* about which it is employ'd; because that their Duties one towards another, and their Religious Worship towards God, as to the main and substance of them, are the same with what we are oblig'd to.

And, *First*, I shall shew that the Blessed *in Heaven* practice the same

Graces, the same Religious Acts of Worship towards God, and of Charity one towards another, which we are oblig'd to on Earth.

Secondly, That they practice them by a Rule.

Thirdly, That this Rule is the same with that by which we ought to regulate our Actions.

First, That the Blessed in Heaven perform the same Religious Acts of Worship towards God, and of Charity one towards another, which we are oblig'd to on Earth.

Tho' some have fancied that the Ever-blessed Saints and Angels employ their happy Eternity only in Admiring the Divine Perfections, and in those Transports which arise from the Contemplation of so glorious a Being as the Deity: Yet upon a strict Enquiry, it will appear, that their endless Life is spent in Action, as well as Contemplation; and that Heaven is a State of fulfilling God's Will, in a vigorous Practice of those Graces which he has enjoin'd us, as well as in Adoring his Divine Nature. For the Virtues and Graces which God has commanded

here, are not only Means to arrive at Happiness hereafter, but to retain it also. In this present Life they are suited to God's Obedience, but in the next to his Enjoyment: so that no Virtue is necessary to compleat a Christian, which is not equally requir'd to perfect a Saint. And tho' the present Necessities and Imperfections of this Life demand the Exercise of some Actions which are useless in the next; yet even those Actions shall not be so much abolish'd, as chang'd into Graces of a nobler Extraction. † They shall be refin'd and exalted, and apply'd to Objects of a purer Nature, and shall share in the happy Change of that Creature to whom they belong. Man advanc'd into Heaven shall retain his Virtues, as well as his Nature; but they too shall be made more pure, more spiritual, as well as that. It must be confest, that some of the * *Schoolmen* are of a different Opinion, particularly as to *Faith* and *Hope*. These Virtues they banish from Heaven, and exclude from the Practice of the Blessed. Their Reasons are, *First*; Because these are imperfect Virtues, and therefore are

† Τότε μᾶλλον ἐκλάμψουσι καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπικρατήσουσι. Oecumen. *in* 1 Cor. c. 13. v. 9.

* v. Gr. *de* Valent. *tom.* 2. *disp.* 5. *q.* 7. *puncto* 4.

not suitable to a perfect State; and *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* *Secondly*; Because St. *Paul*, when he draws his Parallel between *Faith*, *Hope* and *Charity*, says that the Last shall abide in a future State; which he does not affirm of the Two former. *Thirdly*; Because these two Virtues are employ'd about Objects not yet seen, or obtain'd: when therefore their Object shall be seen *Face to Face*, and when with these Eyes, with which *we now see tho' a glass darkly*, we shall view God even as he is, in all his Robes of Glory; then surely Hope and Faith must cease; for *that which a Man has, why does he yet hope for?* And Faith, since *it is an Evidence of Things not seen*, must certainly be done away, when the Vision of God is immediately communicated to us.

But none of these Reasons, are truly Conclusive. Not the First; for if the Imperfection of a Virtue was a sufficient Ground to exclude it out of Heaven, then even *Charity* it self would be exiled thence; for our present Charity is an Imperfect one. The most spotless and pure of Human kind could

never practice it up to that Height, to which it obliges. Nor is there more strength in the second Reason; for tho the Apostle asserts, that *Charity* shall abide in Heaven, yet he does not deny but *Faith* and *Hope* may remain too, nor from his Silence about them, ought we to conclude the contrary. As to the Third Reason; Our Hope shall not be aboliſh'd in Heaven, tho' we enjoy that there, which we hope for here; nor our Faith, tho' our Eyes then behold that Glory, which is at present only the Object of our Belief; for our Faith shall be exalted into clear and distinct Vision, and our Hope into full and firm Comprehension. Nor shall they loſe their own Natures by this exaltation, any more than the first ſtrictures of the Morning are loſt in full Day, or the light of a Man's own Reason in that of Revelation. For *Faith* and Knowledge are the same kinds of Acts in our Underſtandings. *Hope* and Love are the same Motions of our Wills; for what we hope for absent, we love present. If therefore we ſhall know God, and love him in a future State, our *Hope* and *Faith*, by our

Translation into Heaven, shall not perish, but be compleated. For tho' the Gifts of Tongues and Prophecy, those pompous Instruments of Religion, shall be useless in a future State, where there shall be but one Tongue, tun'd to the Eternal Praises of God, and Vision shall disappoint Revelation; yet every Virtue essential to Religion shall continue, and as it was our Employment in this World, so it shall contribute to make up our Happiness in the next. Our *Faith* * shall be Eternally exercis'd in adhering to God, in believing in Him, in entertaining the noblest Apprehensions of His Goodness, Justice, Wisdom and Mercy. Our *Hope* shall be employ'd in Desiring, Loving and Enjoying Him.

* *Sanctus Paulus dixit cæteris evacuatis, manere Fidem, Spem, Dilectionem,* Irenæus, *lib. 4. c. 25.*

But to take a clear View of so nice a Subject, I shall First enquire, whether any Acts of Virtue, which ought to be practic'd on Earth, are useless and unpractic'd by the Blessed in Heaven.

Secondly, I shall shew what Virtues, which ought to be practic'd here on Earth, are practic'd in Heaven, in their greatest latitude, in all their Acts and most material Circumstances.

Thirdly, I shall give some Reasons why

why they are thus practic'd in Heaven.

First, I shall enquire whether any Acts of Virtue, which ought to be practic'd on Earth, are useless and unpractic'd by the Blessed in Heaven?

It must be own'd, that the Acts of some instrumental and ascetick Virtues are unnecessary in Heaven, where the Reason of their Obligation shall cease; and tho' they may justly be said to abide in Charity, as in their common Seminary; yet as to their particular acts, they bear no relation at all to what they are here. And tho' God's will in Heaven is done in conformity to what Manner, in which it ought to be done *upon Earth*; yet the Parallel cannot be supposed to hold in every Circumstance and Punctillo. For the Acts of some Virtues are only peculiar to this Life, and therefore cease with our Relation to it. Thus *Patience* must lose its Name in Heaven, where there shall be no Misery to be suffer'd, no Wrong to be endur'd, Sorrow for Sin shall be no more, where *all Tears shall be wip'd away*, or else chang'd into those, which rise from an Excess of Joy. That *Sagacity*, which is only a Defence against

the Wisdom of the Serpent, shall be utterly disus'd, where nothing shall appear, but *the Harmlessness of the Dove*; where all our Desires are squat'd by the Rule of Reason, and the most refin'd Purity; *Temperance*, under its present limitation, will have no Place; nor *Chastity* enter there. Where there is no *Hungry to give Meat to*, no *Stranger to be taken in*, no *Naked to be cloathed*, no *Sick to be visited*, none *in Prison to be relieved*. *Mercy* and *Almsgiving* will want a Subject; and tho' they bring us into Heaven, they themselves shall not properly enter there; only as they are mixt into our habitual Piety, and good Inclinations.

But, Secondly, There are Virtues which ought to be practic'd here, which are practic'd in Heaven, in all their most material Circumstances, and so become an exact Rule for our Complying with the Will of God. And these are those, whose Acts are agreeable to the State of the Blessed, and which bear a just proportion with their glorious Condition; such as are not prest with any Grievance, nor have any ill or irregular Affection to restrain. Temperance

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it self is even in some regards practic'd by the Blessed: for tho' in those sportless Regions, it is not employ'd in conquering any impure Passion, yet it is advanc'd into a Virtue, whose Nature consists in adhering to God, as the purest and most incorrupt of Beings, the most unstain'd and immaculate of Natures, by such a firm Union, as not to be parted from Him, by the Prospect of the greatest sensual Pleasures, if they could possibly be offer'd to a spiritual Being. Their Prudence is exercis'd in making God their only Choice, and in soon contriving the fittest Means to please and serve Him in an happy Eternity. Their Fortitude in such a dependance on Him, as not to be shaken by the greatest Terrors. Their Justice in a due Submission to Him, as the only Lord to whom they owe their Homage. And thus all other Virtues, whether they relate to God, to themselves, or to acts of Charity one towards another, are practic'd in compliance with the Exigencies of that Blissful State, which I shall,

Thirdly, Prove by some Reasons or Arguments, drawn chiefly from the

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Holy Scripture. And *first*, The Blessed possess Habits of Virtue; and *secondly*, They discover them by outward Acts. The Fathers apply to the Saints all those Places of Scripture, where the Queen is said to *stand on God's right hand in Gold of Ophir*; where she is said to be *all Glorious within*, and *her Cloathing of wrought Gold*. These they understand of the Saints, and the Ornaments with which they are Cloath'd, they apply to that habitual Virtue with which they are adorn'd. St. *Chrysostom* understands them not [illegible] and *Arethas Cæsariensis* says, that the Saints were not dress'd, [illegible] but [illegible]. But granting that this Sence of Habitual Virtue may be only a flourish of these Fathers, or (as some imagine) that these Places only imply the glorious State of the Church Triumphant in general; yet it may be clearly made out, *secondly*, That Acts of Virtue are perform'd by the Blessed: and since these flow from Habits, and are not really distinct from them, we may suppose that they are endued with Habits of Virtue too; since it is the most perfect

* In his Homily on the Text, *My Grace is sufficient for thee.*

fect Act of Virtue, which flows from the most perfect Habit. The Saints practice the Acts of the first Table; for they are *before the Throne of God, and serve him day and night.* And secondly, Acts of Charity, which belong to the second Table, in rejoycing in one another's Happiness, in their provoking one another to praise and glorify God. The Angels, that higher Order of blest Spirits, perform God's Will in the same Manner. For first, they act in conformity to the first Table, in Adoring and singing * Praises to God; for *all the Angels stand round about the Throne, and fall before the Throne on their Faces, and worship God*: to the second, by their Acts of Charity towards Men, by their Guardianship over them, by ministring to their Salvation, by transporting them from this Scene of Woe and Vanity to Mansions of Bliss and Joy. Thus the Blessed practice the great Duties of Virtue and Religion; act above as we ought to do below, in conformity to the Divine Will.

But, Secondly, As they practice these Virtues, so they practice them by a Rule.

* Ἐστὶν ὁ Ἀγγέλος ζῶν λογικὸν, ὑμνολογικὸν. Athanas. q. 30. ad Antiochum.

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Which is very evident; for every Agent, which is; whether it is the supreme Agent, or an intermediate one; whether it moves by pure Instinct or Nature, or whether it acts by Choice or Election, yet has some Rule of its Actions; whether this Rule is planted in its Nature within, or deliverd to it from without. God Himself, the supreme Agent, who acts sometimes without Instruments, without the Interposal of Time, without Matter or Principle, yet never acts without Rule. Tho' his Actions are free and uncontroul'd, yet are they confin'd to a Standard, by His Wisdom and Justice, from which even His Power cannot make them swerve. For *Justice and Judgment are the Habitation* (or as others, the Basis or Foundation) *of his Throne*. As his own connate, original Wisdom, or the Rectitude of his own Nature, is the Rule and Measure of his own Actions; so is the Transcript of it, if I may so speak, the Rule for all other Agents to move by. *He has given the Sea his decree, that the Waters should not pass his Commandments*; and if the proud tumultuous Waves move by his Divine Rules,

Rules; how much more has he settled a Rule for his Angels, *that excell in strength*; for those his blessed Ministers, *who do his Pleasure*? The very Title of *Angel* imports Duty and Obedience to that glorious Power from whence it receiv'd its Commission; and Obedience implies some Rule by which it ought to be proportion'd. As the Angels, so the Saints, in due Subordination, are in their several Stations rang'd under Rules and Laws. For they are all Parts of the great Celestial Polity, and all make up one Church Triumphant; therefore must be subject to the same Heavenly Canons, Laws and Constitutions. For,

Thirdly, This Rule is the same with that by which we ought to regulate our Actions; therefore they are very fitly set out in this Prayer of our Lord's, as a Pattern for our Obedience.

Now the Rule by which we ought to manage our Practice, is that which is stylʼd the *Moral Law*, or that Law which first being stampʼd on Man's Heart in his Innocence, (notwithstanding what Mr. *Hobbs*, * Mr. *Locke*, and others have said to the contrary,) was

* *Human Understanding*, p. 366. & passim.

after his Fall retriev'd by *Moses* and the Prophets, and lastly by *Christ* and his holy Apostles: that Law which prescribes to us, to entertain noble Apprehensions of God, to worship and serve him; which teaches us Moderation towards our selves, and Justice towards our Neighbours; which is comprehended in that brief Summary, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy Neighbour as thy self.* This is the Rule of our Actions on Earth, and that it is the Rule of the Saints and Angels in Heaven, may be thus prov'd: For if that it is the Rule of the Saints, or of the *Spirits of Just Men made perfect.* That Law which recovers in the Saints that Image of God, which was defac'd by the Fall, is the Rule of their Actions; but the acting up to the *Moral Law*, is a Recovery of this Image, and so must be that Rule. For Heaven is properly nothing else but a Recovery of that State (with something more of Perfection) *from which Man by Transgression fell.* If therefore acting in conformity with the *Moral Law*, in all its Points, is a Recovery of that State, and that Image; it is probable to suppose, that

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in Heaven, this Law shall be the Rule of the Actions of the Blessed Saints: but an acting up to the *Moral Law*, in all its Points, is a Retrieval of the Divine Image; for the being *made in the Image of God*, is nothing else but being made in conformity with the *Moral Law*, and in a State of Legal Innocence. For the Apostle speaking of the Image of God in Man, says, That it was nothing else, but Man's being *made in Righteousness and true Holiness*, which are the two great Points of the *Moral Law*; the former denoting the Duties of the second Table, and the latter of the first. As long therefore as Man liv'd up to the *Moral Law*, maintain'd *Righteousness and true Holiness*; so long was he to bear the Divine Image: but *Man being in Honour* had *no Understanding*, but became *like the Beasts that perish*. For when he once broke the Law of his Maker, (whatsoever the Nature of his Sin was,) he lost this Image and Likeness to God, and resembled rather that Cursed Spirit who had Betray'd him, than that Blessed God who had Created him. And under this resemblance with the Apostate Angels had he continued,

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had not God (by an Effort of Goodness, which excell'd even that by which he made him) offer'd to retrieve him to his former Image and Likeness. And this was by assisting him with his Grace, to live up to the *Moral Law*, which he had before broken; to keep the Divine Commands, which would so purify his Nature, as to renew the Divine Image, in some proportion, till he should be receiv'd into Heaven, which his Saviour had purchas'd for him, where the Image of God should be renew'd, with a Lustre surpassing that in which Man was at first created. But the reason why the Image of God should shine with a peculiar Splendour in Heaven, seems to be, because Man is there put out of a possibility of sinning any more, and of defacing this Divine Image. And this Heavenly State, being only a renewing of that Image of God, which Man had shortly after his Creation lost, if that Image did (as was before shewn) at first consist in Man's living up to the Rules of the *Moral Law*, of *Righteousness and true Holiness*; if this Image was forfeited by Transgressing these Laws; if it is in some degree renew'd

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in this Life, by acting up to them; it seems to follow, that it shall be totally renew'd, and eternally preserv'd in Heaven, by an everlasting Obedience of the Saints to these Laws of Morality, of *Righteousness and true Holiness*. This Law therefore is the Rule for the Saints to act by in Heaven.

And, Secondly, It is the Rule for the Angels to act by also, which may be shewn from an Argument drawn from the Fall and Revolt of the Evil Angels, and accurs'd Spirits. The Argument is this: If those Spirits which fell from before the Throne of God, fell by their Disobeying that Law of God, which is styl'd the *Moral Law*; it follows, that they were oblig'd to the Observance of this *Moral Law*. For every criminal Disobedience supposes an antecedent Obligation. But if these accurs'd Spirits were ty'd to the keeping of this Law, we must conclude, that all the rest of the Angelick Hierarchy were under the same Allegiance. For surely there was not one Rule of Obedience given to one part of the Celestial Host, and another to the Remainders. So that the Point to be prov'd is, That the Angels

fell by Transgressing the *Moral Law*. The Transgressing of the *Moral Law* was the Crime which baniſh'd them Heaven. Whether their unpardonable Fault was Ingratitude towards God, as ſome ſuppoſe; or Infidelity, as others; or Pride, and a Reflection on their own Perfections, without conſidering God as the Author, as moſt; or Envy, as * St. *Chryſoſtom* and † St. *Auſtin*; or whether it was (as is moſt likely) a Combination of all theſe, ſome foul and diſmal Sin form'd out of the Malignity and Venom of each one of them mixt together; yet was it a Violation of the *Moral Law*. It was an Injury offer'd to that Light which God had put within them, as well as within Mankind. They therefore who ſinn'd againſt the *Moral Law*, who are Eternally puniſh'd for this ſinning, were ty'd to the Obſervance of this Law. If they were oblig'd to it once, ſo are the Angels which ſtand at preſent; for the bleſſed Angels are juſt the ſame now, which they were once. Tho' now the Objects of God's Eternal Vengeance, yet were they once his chief Miniſters; as much his Favourites, as the moſt ſpotleſs, moſt unſtain'd

* *Chryſoſt.* in *Gen. Hom.* 19.

† *Civit. Dei, lib.* 14. *c.* 11.

stain'd of all the Angels; ty'd to no other Rules, no other Terms of Obedience. The Blessed Angels are therefore at present rang'd under the Oeconomy of the *Moral Law*, as well as the Cursed were immediately after their Creation, and before their Fall: which may be farther prov'd, by the Analogy that there is between the *Moral Law*, and the *Celestial*. There is the nearest Resemblance and Analogy between the *Moral Law*, and the *Celestial*; whether we consider the *Moral Law*, as it may be reduc'd to One Precept, to Two, or to Ten. It may be reduc'd to One, to that of Love; for *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*. But the most perfect Love is display'd in Heaven, in the most perfect Charity: for *tho' Prophecies shall fail, tho' Tongues shall cease, tho' Knowledge shall vanish away; yet Charity never fails*, but is compleated in Heaven. *'Tis the bond of Perfectness*, and in it, as in a Center, all Duties meet and are accorded. The *Moral Law* may be farther combin'd into Two Precepts: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*, and *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*; for *on these Two Commandments hang all the Law*

and the Prophets. But the Law remains in Heaven under this Character. For first, The Saints and Angels love their Ever-blessed God with the purest Transports of Devotion; they adore him with the most profound Veneration, and they serve him with the most faithful Homage. Secondly, They pursue one another with the most sincere Love and unfeign'd Charity; they rejoyce at one another's Happiness, and are as unanimous in their Affections towards one another, as they are in their Adoration of God.

But Lastly, The *Moral Law* is dilated into Ten Precepts, and under this latitude they are practic'd in Heaven with the utmost vigour. Eight of these Precepts are Negative, and there is no doubt but that they are observ'd by the Saints and Angels with the greatest accuracy. Far be it from those pure Spirits, to lift up their Eyes to any God but the True One; to detract from, or to envy one another; to desire what belongs to another, no not another's Happiness.

As to the Affirmative Commands, tho' they do not abide literally, yet they

remain myſteriouſly; becauſe they are chang'd into better. The Fourth, of the Sabbath, or the Lord's Day, ſhall be alter'd into a more noble one: for in Heaven there ſhall be no diſtinction of Days, but all the Rounds of an happy Eternity ſhall make up one Day, which ſhall not know a ſecond; and that wholly appropriated to the Lord, one Everlaſting Sabbath, one Eternal Reſt. As to the * Fifth, it ſhall not be aboliſhed, but perfected: for tho' all Carnal Relations ſhall ceaſe, as only ſubſervient to the Neceſſities of this Life; yet ſhall that Honour, that Reverence, that Obedience, which are by the Fifth Commandment peculiarly attributed to Parents, become due to all the Saints.

The force of all is, That the Obedience of the Bleſſed is a juſt Rule for our Obedience, on account of the *Matter* of it; becauſe they practice the ſame Virtues, and practice them by the ſame Rule, which we are oblig'd to. God's Will perform'd *in Heaven*, is therefore on this account a juſt Standard for our accompliſhing of it *on Earth*. So is it on account of the *Manner* of its Performance, by the Bleſſed Saints and Angels, which was the Second General. So

* *Affirmativorum* [*ſc.* Præceptorum] *erit in beatitudine ſumma obſervatio, niſi forte illius de Honoratione parentum; quia non erit neceſſitas impendendi hunc actum.* Scot. *l.* 3. *Sent. d.* 38. *q.* 1.

So that I ſhall very briefly ſhew, that they perform God's Will after that Manner, as to be juſt Patterns for us.

For, Firſt, They perform it with all poſſible Chearfulneſs and Alacrity. The Word is no ſooner out of God's Mouth, but it is alſo executed; and theſe Miniſters of his ſtay not ſo long, as even to promiſe Obedience. There is not among them any demurring to the quality of the Command, or any delay put to the Execution of it, by an over-modeſt repreſenting their own unfitneſs for their Task. They queſtion not at all with God about the ſuitableneſs thereof, nor yet debate with themſelves, whether or no, or with what Vigour they ſhall apply themſelves to the Execution of it.

Secondly, They perform God's Will uniformly. For an imperfect Obedience is (in ſtrict ſpeaking) no Obedience at all; for he who only obeys ſo far as himſelf pleaſes, only does God's Will as far as it complies with his own. There is this more extenſive Proof of the Uniformity of the Angel's Obedience, That the greateſt part of it is employ'd

ploy'd in discharging such Commands, as subject them, in some proportion, to those Creatures which are plac'd below them. Such are those Commands, which demand their attendance upon us, who are by Creation *made somewhat lower than they*; yet have made our selves much more so, by our Sins and Frailties. So that it is easy to be imagin'd, That had not their Obedience been truly uniform, it would not have carried them to a compliance with such Branches of it, as seem not fully consistent with the Dignity and Grandeur of their Order and Station.

Thirdly, Their Comportment with the Divine Will is constant and settled, and they always discharge the Will of God, as well as chearfully and uniformly. That Establishment which is destin'd to their Piety, by the Election of God, will most certainly produce this Constancy. Besides this, the Scripture displays them as always looking on the Face of God, expecting (as it were) and inviting his Commands, or travelling about his Messages; as continually descending from Heaven about their Earthly Ministrations, or ascend-

ing up thither after the Execution of them.

Fourthly, The Obedience of the Angels is as compleat, as it is chearful, uniform and conſtant; and reaches to every Branch of their Injunction, as well as to all God's Commands; becauſe as there can be no doubt of their ſufficiency for ſuch a Compliance, who are ſo near to the Divine Influences, and ſo glorioufly adorn'd by them; ſo the ſame Reaſon and Obedience, which move them to have a reſpect to all God's Commands, will incite them to have a regard to every the minuteſt Punctilio, as having the ſame Impreſs of the ſame Divine Will ſtampt upon it.

A DISCOURSE Concerning *The Qualifications of* PRAYER, Or, *A Method to Pray in the Spirit. Against the* Enthusiasts.

EPHES. Chap. VI. ver. 18.

Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit.

AS Religion is the Life of the Soul, so is Prayer the vital Spirit of Religion, without which it can neither *live*, nor *move*, nor *have its Being*. This is the chief Branch of the Worship of God, requir'd of all who acknowledge Him to Be, and most reasonable for all who own the World to be govern'd by His Providence, and themselves to stand in need either of His Grace or His Pardon, or who hope for His Re-

wards, or fear His Puniſhments in a future State. And as it is thus a very neceſſary Duty, ſo (if exactly practic'd) is it a difficult one too. For it is a Diſcourſing with God; and for Man, *who is but of yeſterday*, to correſpond with the Almighty, *who inhabits Eternity*, muſt employ the utmoſt force of all his Powers and Faculties. For if the *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*, who were always without Spot or Blemiſh, and in whom was never found any Guile, cover their Faces while they are Praiſing and Adoring the infinite Perfections of God; what Geſture can be humble enough for Man, who compoſes himſelf to Pray to Him laden with his Sins, and whoſe Iniquities have gone over his Head? If thoſe glorious Spirits are deſcrib'd in Scripture, as ſhifting from place to place while they are worſhiping their Creator, as conquer'd and overpower'd by the Purity of His Nature; with what Confuſion muſt Man appear before Him, who was *conceiv'd in Sin, and born in Iniquity?* What attention and application of Thought? What modeſty of Expreſſion? What ſubmiſſiveneſs of Behaviour? What

Love

Love and Admiration? What warmth of Affection muſt be us'd to make our Sacrifices acceptable to our Maker? And certainly, as it had been the higheſt Preſumption, to have offer'd to have entertain'd any Entercourſe with the Almighty, had not He Himſelf encourag'd it; ſo ſince He has vouchſafed to do it, it is our moſt excellent Glory, that we can addreſs our Supplications to Him. But ſtill the Obligation abides, to put them up with all the Devotion and Fervency of Spirit, which our Imperfections are capable of; to prepare our ſelves with the niceſt diligence, that we may

Pray always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit.

By *Praying always*, is not meant a conſtant or continued Exerciſe of the Act of Prayer, ſo as to be always invoking the Name of God. For this would be inconſiſtent with our other relative Duties: for there are Virtues to be practic'd, which more immediately regard our Neighbour and our ſelves, as well as thoſe which ſolely reſpect God; and we are oblig'd to Juſtice, Charity and Humanity, as well

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as to Pray, Praiſe and Adore. But by *Praying always*, is to be underſtood ſuch a Godlike Frame and Temper of Spirit, accompany'd with ſuch an Innocence of Life, and reliſh of Heavenly Things, that we may be ever diſpos'd for this Duty, when fit opportunities ſhall call for it. By *Praying in the Spirit* (whatſoever the *Enthuſiaſts* pretend) ſeems to be only imply'd, that our Prayers ought to have the *Qualifications* before mention'd; ſo that they ought to be put up rather for things Spiritual, than Temporal; for God's aſſiſtance to enable us to perſevere in Goodneſs, for the removal or averting of Temptations, for all Graces needful for us, and Means for the ſecuring or encreaſing of them; which are ſtyl'd the *Gifts*, or Privileges of the *Holy Spirit*. And this too falls under the former Head, and is a *Qualification* neceſſary to make us Pray aright; ſince there can be no better Argument that we are well *qualified* for Prayer, than that we pray for Bleſſings of the moſt noble Importance, the moſt momentous Concern. So that in the Text are couch'd the *Qualifications* requir'd to make us ſucceſsful

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Petitioners at the Throne of Grace. For the reason why so many Prayers are not heard by Heaven, after those Promises which are annex'd to the Performance of this Duty, is, because we are not duly accomplish'd to be Candidates for its Mercies. And it is easy for us in this Case, to vindicate the Faithfulness of God, and to make an Apology for our Maker, in our Maker's own Words, which are, that *We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss.* In order therefore to make us fit Supplicants to the God of Glory, and to put our Souls into such a Temper, that they may be constantly and habitually fitted for the Discharge of this Duty, there are several *Qualifications* needful. I shall therefore consider,

First, What *Qualifications* are necessary to prepare us for Prayer, or before we Pray, and in order to it.

Secondly, What is requir'd in the very time, or act of our Praying, when our Devotions are on the Wing, and our Lips are *touch'd with a Coal from the Altar.*

Thirdly, What must be done after we have Pray'd, to make our antecedent Prayers duly effectual.

Fourth-

Fourthly, What Acts are to be continued and extended through each of these, both before, in, and after our Prayers.

First therefore, What *Qualifications* are necessary to prepare us for Prayer, or before we Pray, and in order to it.

Now the First *Qualification* necessary to prepare us for Prayer, is the Purity of our * Hearts, or the Direction of our Lives by the Commandments of God. For if our Affections are impure, or our Ways unrighteous, it is in vain to make our Applications to God: for we know that *God heareth not Sinners, but if any man is a worshipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth.* For, *The Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open to their Prayers* alone. For without Godliness, (whatsoever *Antinomian* Schemes some Persons may draw,) whether it consists in Innocence, or sincere Repentance, our Prayers can never mount up to the presence of God; because the Burden of our Sins will certainly keep them from ascending to that Holy Place, where nothing, but what is compleatly so, can ap-

* Θεῷ δὲ θύν διὰ τέλους δίκαιος ὤν, Μὴ λαμπρὸς ὢν τῇ χλαμύσιν. ὡς τῇ καρδίᾳ. *Menander.*

appear. And it would be Presumption, to hope that our spotless Saviour should present so unacceptable a Sacrifice to his Father, as the Petitions of a Supplicant, who declares himself to be in a State of Hostility against both of them, by an avow'd complying with what they most abhor. Nay, it is the most unwarrantable Insolence, for him who still retains a Love for his Sins, and yields to them upon the general returns of Temptation, to approach his Maker in any Holy Office. For it is only an *honouring* Him *with his Lips, while his Heart is far from* Him; and seems to be what the Apostle calls a *Lying to God*, a professing himself his most devoted, most obedient Servant, while his own Conscience, by a reflection on his Actions, will tell him that he is his open and inveterate Enemy. 'Tis a colluding with Him, *who tries the Heart and the Reins*, and *to whose Eyes all things are naked and open*, as if Omniscience could be impos'd on by Pretences, or a Religious Pageantry was tantamount to Solid Virtue and Piety; or saying of, *Lord, Lord*, would excuse for the not doing the Will of *our Father which is*

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in Heaven. So that till we are free from all known and willful Sin, 'tis to no purpose to make any Supplication to God. He will not hear, will not regard our Prayers. They are like *unhallowed Fire* offer'd to Him, and are *an abomination in his sight*; for of him, who is not resolv'd to part with his Sins, the very Prayers are sinful. That Duty which draws others nigher to God, casts him at a greater distance from him. That Ordinance which sanctifies others, serves only to aggravate his deplorable State, and to render his Condition more insufferable. But neither, on the other hand, is he less criminal, if he does not Pray at all: for he is not excus'd from this Duty, by being unqualify'd for it, but he becomes guilty, not only of those Sins which are the hindrances of his Devotion, but of that Inability to Devotion, which they have caus'd; and so hard are his Circumstances, that he is likely to suffer, not only for making his Duty impossible by sinning, but even for not discharging it, while it is thus impossible. And this justly enough too, because this Impossibility was willfully superinduc'd; an Act of his own

choice

choice and free election, and for which he has none to blame besides himself, and his own wild Passions. So that while his Case continues thus, he is on all accounts *unqualify'd* for Prayer, and yet is guilty too if he does not Pray, till by hearty Repentance he has freed himself from his Sins. So indispensibly necessary is Purity from Sin, to prepare us for Prayer. But as there are different kinds of Sins, so is there the greatest necessity that we should be innocent of those Sins, which are most oppos'd to the Spirit of Prayer; for they are not all of them equally destructive of it. But these are Malice, Ill-will, or Hatred of our Brother. Now as these Vices commence two manner of ways, either by Injuring our Brother, or by receiving an Injury from him; so we may be suppos'd, in either Case, to be guilty of them, and therefore on all regards *unqualify'd* for Prayer, if we do not contribute our utmost towards the suppressing of them. As for Instance: If I have injur'd my Brother, and given him any umbrage to hate me, I am in a great measure guilty of the Sin, and therefore am *unqualify'd*

for Prayer, if I do not endeavour a speedy Reconcilement with him. For *if my Gift is before the Altar, and I there remember that my Brother has ought against me*, (any just cause of complaining that I have injur'd him,) I am oblig'd to *leave* my *Gift before the Altar, and go, and first be reconciled to* my *Brother*. So on the other hand, when we are injur'd by our Brother, we are guilty of the Malice, and the *Sin lies at our door*, and so our Prayers become ineffectual, if we express an eager Desire to revenge our selves; if we shew an Aversion and Unwillingness to forgive him; if we neglect his Proposals of Peace and Accommodation. For how can we expect that God should pardon our Sins of the blackest Character, if we will not forgive our *Fellow-servant the least Offence*? And has not our Blessed Lord taught us, that we cannot Pray to God to *forgive us our Trespasses*, unless *we forgive them that trespass against us*? And as often as we use this sacred Prayer of our Saviour's, if we do not forgive those who have offended us from the bottom of our Hearts, we desire that God would not forgive us; that He would

would remember and revenge our Sins against Him, as we purpose to revenge those which our Brother has committed against us. So that in effect we turn the best *Prayer* that ever was *into Sin*, and use the Words of our Saviour, who *spoke as never Man spake*, to our own Damnation.

So that Purity from Sin, especially from Malice, Hatred or Ill-will, is the First *Qualification* in order to prepare us for Prayer.

The Second preparatory *Qualification* for Prayer, is a Consideration of the Nature of our own Wants, and of the Manner by which God has promis'd to supply them, that we may know what to pray for, and what Method to take to have our Prayers answer'd. And in making an Estimate of our own Wants, we are to consider our selves as Creatures whose chief Interest depends on a future State, whose greatest Necessities are those which regard the Soul. As to what concerns this Life, we are to resign that over to our Heavenly Father's good Providence, with a *Father, not my Will, but thine be done.* But as to spiritual Wants, concerning these we are

to strive with the greatest and most unconditionate Importunity, and a pious Violence is to be used to Heaven, till we find our selves successful in what we pray for. But then, Secondly, we must reflect on the Terms on which God has undertaken to assist these Wants, and to resolve to comply with them, are they never so uneasy. Thus do we ask for Pardon for Sins we know the terms on which this suit be granted, are, provided we repent and forsake them. We are therefore to resolve to set our selves about this Repentance and Amendment, before we pray for the Pardon. Thus because Grace and Virtue cannot be compass without the use of good and wise Endeavours, we are to resolve on these, before we petition for those. For the Promises of God, tho infallible in regard to any Grace, ought nevertheless to encourage us to travel with more Ardour and Fidelity, to merit the Effects of them. And if we ask after this manner, it shall be given us; for every one who *asketh* in this wise, *receiveth.*

The Third *Qualification* preparatory to Prayer, is *Faith*, or a Trust in God, that

that He will grant us what we pray for, according to our Saviour's Promise: *All things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer, believing, ye shall receive.* Now we may be said to be *qualified* with this Grace, when sensible of our own Wants, we commend our selves to God by Prayer, relying on his Divine Goodness and Power, that he will give us what we sue for: that is, (as was before hinted) if we are careful of performing the Conditions on which he stipulated to give; if we ask for Pardon for Sins, after forming them; for virtuous Endowments, in industriously seeking after them; for the assistance of God's Spirit, in concurring with it, and making good use of it; for Health, or Ease, or any other prosperous Turns of Providence and outward things, with a due submission to God's Will, join'd with the use of lawful Means to attain them. For to trust that God will hear us without these, is not Faith, but an unwarrantable Confidence; not Hope, but Presumption.

The Fourth *Qualification* preparatory for Prayer, is a good Intention to use what God shall bless us with, to excel-

lent Ends and Designs, to the Glory of God, and the Advancement of our own, and Brother's Salvation. Otherwise, if we only ask for God's Blessings, to consume them on our Lusts, we petition Heaven to contribute to our Undoing, and beg of the Almighty Materials for our Sins, and for Occasions to provoke Him. God is oblig'd to deny us out of Love and Compassion; for should he hear us, it would be the greatest Indication that he is displeas'd with us, and that he is about to ruin us by so cruel an Indulgence.

So that *Freedom from Sin*, either by Innocence, or sincere Repentance, especially from Malice or Ill-will; a *Resolution to perform the Terms, on which She knows is promis'd to our Prayers*; a *Trust that God will grant us what we thus ask for*; and a *Good Intention to use what God blesses our Prayers with to his Glory*, are *Qualifications* antecedently necessary to Prayer, and preparatory to it. Without these, an Address to the Throne of Grace, is to no purpose. The most artful and elaborate Petition can meet with no welcome there; but like the *Dove*, when she was at first *sent* out of

the *Ark*, after it has in vain roam'd about the Heavens, without finding any admission, must return to its disappointed owner *empty*. And if these *Qualifications* are needful for us before we apply our selves to God in Prayer, while we are yet at a distance from him; what will be sufficient for us to do in the time and act of Praying, when we are before the very Presence of the Living God, and the pure Eyes of the Eternal are fixt upon us? How dreadful must that place be, which, by God's being more immediately resident in it, is none other but the *House of God*, and the *Gate of Heaven*? So that we shall enquire,

Secondly, What is required in the very time and act of our Praying, while our Devotions are on the Wing, and our Lips are *touch'd with a Coal from the Altar*.

Now the First *Qualification* necessary for us in the time of Prayer, is *Humility*; because Prayer is a Talking with God. And this *Humility* ought to be form'd in us, First, by the Consideration of the Majesty of that God, with

whom we have to do: That He is the *Higheſt* far above all, who has *Heaven for his Throne*, and the *Earth for his Footſtool. Who meaſures the Sea in the palm of His Hands. In whoſe Hand is the Soul of every living thing, and the Breath of all Mankind. Hell is naked before Him, and Deſtruction hath no covering. He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing.* And, Secondly, this Humility ought to be rais'd by the ſence of our own Vileneſs. Firſt, as we are Men and the Creatures of God, over whom he has an abſolute Power and Authority. As we are nothing but a little breathing Duſt and Aſhes, which after a *ſhort time*, but very *full of trouble*, muſt return to that out of which we were form'd. If the moſt glorious of his Creatures are ſo deſpicable before Him, that *He puts no Truſt in his Servants, and charges even his Angels with Folly*; how ſhall they come before Him, *who dwell in Houſes of Clay, whoſe Foundation is in the Duſt?* But, Secondly, much more ought we to be humble in our Prayers, as we are Sinners, and worthy (if God ſhould reward us after

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our Sins) of Eternal Death. We have affronted Infinite Majesty, and therefore deserve Infinite Punishment. And tho' through the Mercies of God, and the Merits of our Blessed Saviour, our severe Repentance may hinder the execution of this Sentence; yet we must remember, that Humility is a part even of Repentance it self. And the consideration that it is the Goodness of God alone, which makes our Misery less, ought to make our Sin greater, and heighten our Humility for having offended so gracious a Creator, when we pray for Remission for those Offences.

The Second *Qualification* in the time of Praying, is a due fixedness and attention of Mind. For God is an Object so noble, that he demands the utmost Intension of our Thoughts. They ought all to be collected, and fix'd on him, directed as the *Faces of the Cherubim in the Ark* wholly *towards the Mercy-seat*. And in order to this, our Minds ought to be disengag'd from whatsoever may occasion their straggling; as from an over-violent Love of the World, its Pleasures and Interests, and to be possest with whatsoever may raise a just Attention

tention; as with an awful ſence of the Dignity and Excellence of this Duty, the ineſtimable Worth of thoſe Mercies for which we petition, the greatneſs of our Wants and Neceſſities. Nor is it enough, (as the * *Schoolmen* looſely determin in this Matter,) that this Attention is purpoſed and intended, tho' it is not executed. Nor is it ſufficient that we come with a Reſolution to be attentive, if we do not vigorouſly practice it. For is a Reſolution a competent Diſcharge of any other Duty? Or was the *Son* in the Goſpel juſtify'd for reſolving to *go and work in the Vineyard*, and yet not doing it? A Reſolution to Pray in general, might as well abſolve us from not Praying at all, as a Reſolution to be attentive, from not being ſo. No: tho' God will make abatement for the Imperfection of our Attention, reſulting from the unavoidable weakneſs of our Natures, or our being diſus'd to Think or Reflect; yet will not he diſpenſe with the total want of it. And if we are ſorry for this Imperfection of our Attention, and endeavour effectively to correct it, God will concur with us, and by drawing nigher to

* v. Aquin. 2da 2dæ Qu. 84. *ad* 13. *Non ex neceſſitate requiritur quod attentio adſit Orationi per totum, &c.*

to us, and discovering his Perfections with a greater Lustre, will make our Attention not only easy and natural, but even also pleasant and delightful.

The Third *Qualification* of Prayer, in the act of Praying, is a good measure of Desire, and fervency of Affection. For a lukewarm Petitioner bespeaks a Denial, and he himself contributes to his own Repulse. He seems unconcern'd in making his Suit, and so may expect God to be less concern'd to grant it. He seems to slight the Mercy, while he asks it. Can it therefore be imagin'd, that he should think himself much oblig'd by it, or be thankful for it? While a fervent Prayer shews how ardently we desire a Mercy, and how thankfully we are like to receive it. And this is a strong Inducement for God to bestow it on us; for He is so tender and indulgent, that He cannot deny us any thing which is fit for us, when He sees us wrought up to a due valuation of it, and our Hearts earnestly bent upon it. For it is the *fervent Prayer of the righteous man, which prevaileth much.*

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The Fourth *Qualification* of Prayer, in the act of Praying, is a general Love for Mankind, and a Concern for their Happiness. For the Compass of our Prayers ought to be as large as that of our Charity, and with its open Arms embrace all Mankind: extended even to those, who are perhaps contriving to *lay our Honours* and Bodies *in the dust*, while we are mounting their Souls, in our Devotions, up to the Heavens. For we are oblig'd by our Holy Religion, to *bless them which curse us*, and to *pray for them which despitefully use us*. And in pursuit of this universal Charity, our Saviour, (according to * St. *Cyprian*'s pious Observation,) has taught us to say, *Our*, and not *My Father*, only, *which art in Heaven*, that mindful of our divine and common Original, and of that glorious dependance on which we stand related to God, we might unite our Prayers for all those, who bear the same illustrious Character of the *Sons of God*.

* *De Orat.*

The Fifth *Qualification* of Prayer is, That our Prayers ought to be short, not abounding with an excess of Words. For Prayer is the Language of the Heart, rather than of the Tongue; of

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the Affections, more than of the Lips; and great and rais'd Passions, such as make up the most perfect Devotion, are seldom attended with a copious fluency of Words. For the Soul is too much employ'd within, to have leisure to exercise it self about Flourish, or tedious Harangue. Of this concise Nature are most of the sacred Hymns and Prayers which are extant, suitable to the Majesty of God: for the most short, is also the most solemn and stately Method of Address, and agreeable to Mankind's Infirmities, which hinder us from enlivening with a due Spirit a long and tedious Prayer. Of this Nature are our Saviour's own Prayers, one of the last of which, in his Agony, is so short, and yet so pathetical, that it seems (according to the History) to be accompany'd with more drops of Blood than Words.

The Last *Qualification*, in the act of Praying, is Perseverance. Perseverance, not as the *Messalians*, from the Apostle's Command in the Words, of *Praying always*, thought, by an unbroken continuation of the acts of Prayer; but by a constant Preparation for, and Exer-

Exercise of them, as opportunities, and freedom from other Duties demand. For this is the Perfection, not only of Prayer, but of all Virtues. Without this they are only faint efforts, and attempts to please God, which shall never be accepted of, nor rewarded by Him. But it has a most especial force in Prayer: for if the Unjust Judge in the Gospel, *who neither fear'd God, nor regarded Man*, yet granted the Widow's Petition, mov'd purely by her resolute Perseverance; how much more shall God, who is the Just Judge of all Mankind, and whose Goodness inclines Him to be kind and beneficent to His Creatures, grant our Requests, if we cry *day and night to Him*? *I tell you*, (as the Gospel has it) *He will grant them speedily*. *Humility* therefore, *Attention*, *Fervour*, *Charity*, *Brevity* and *Perseverance*, are *Qualifications* necessary in the time of Prayer. But there are,

Thirdly, *Qualifications* necessary after we have pray'd, to make our antecedent Prayers duly effectual.

As First, an observation of God's returns to our Prayers; an eyeing the ten-

tendency of his Providence, whether he does grant our Petitions or not; especially as to spiritual Concerns. And there is an infallible Mark to measure our Success by: for we may assuredly conclude, That God has heard our Prayers, as to Pardon of Sins, (for Instance,) if we find our selves free from voluntary Transgressions. But if after our Prayers we are as much Sinners as ever, this is a sign that God has not heard our Petitions, and that our Sins are not pardon'd; and the fault must be our own, because we did not truly repent of them, before we pray'd for their Remission. So that we must renew our Repentance, as well as our Prayers; and if the former is sincere, and the latter duly *qualify'd*, we shall certainly be successful. Thus we may know that God has granted our Prayers as to spiritual Graces, if we find our selves improv'd in Virtue after our Prayers: otherwise the fault is our own; we have not endeavour'd vigorously after Grace. So that we must reinforce our Endeavours, as well as our Prayers; and if there is no deficiency on our part, it is certain there will be

none

none on God's: for *He is always more ready to Give, than we to Pray.* He is prepar'd to prevent with his Blessings even our first Wishes for them, and to reward our pious Desires, even before they have time to cloath themselves with Words.

The Second *Qualification* after Prayer, is a returning God Thanks for His Grants and Denials: that is, His Denials of temporal Advantages. For this is often as great a Proof of His Fatherly Goodness and Concern for us, as any of His most Merciful Indulgences. 'Tis a mysterious Method of Kindness, which obliges us against our Wills, and makes us happy in contradiction to our most passionate Desires; depriving us of what would prove to us only a more agreeable Ruine, a more pleasant and beautiful Destruction. And how severe soever Disappointments may appear to us at first, yet the event and close of Things will shew, that we had good reason to be thankful to God, for His crossing us in our Wishes, and for visibly frustrating us in the success of our Prayers; and we shall at last find the satisfaction of consigning our choice

over

over to Omniscience, and that God, (to use our Saviour's familiar, but expressive Words, with some alteration,) when we prayed for a *Serpent*, has given us a *Fish*, and when we petition'd for a *Stone*, has bless'd us with *Bread*.

The Third *Qualification* after Prayer, is a due Value of our great Privilege, That we may pray to God. For how great is the Prerogative of a Christian, that he may discourse, and converse, and prevail with God? That there is no difficulty of Access, no doubt of Acceptation? That there is no hinderance of his Entercourse with the Almighty, but his own Sins, which are no longer Impediments, but as far as they are pertitted in, and not broken off by true Repentance.

The Fourth *Qualification*, is learning by God's Denials, to make fitter Addresses for the future. For if my Prayers are not granted, there must be some fault in me. Till that is amended, Heaven will be deaf to my Petitions, and neglect my most solemn Addresses. Either I do not pray for what I ought, or not after that manner which I ought; therefore, in the Language of the Psal-

mist, my *Words are* only *like the Chaff before the Wind*, and the *Angel of the Lord* will certainly *scatter them*.

The Fifth *Qualification* is Alms-giving. For it is meet that we should express our Gratitude for God's Mercies, by our Bounty to our Brethren, which ask of us, and need our relief. This is all the Return we can make to Providence, for the innumerable Bounties which it scatters upon us with open hands. This is a kind of relieving our Saviour in his suffering Members; and he tells us, that he will look on it, as if done to himself. And there can be no greater Inducement for God to bestow temporal good things on us, than if we consecrate a part of them to him by our Alms. We render him, if I may so speak, our Debtor, and (pardon the boldness of the Expression) we may in some measure, according to the Promises made to this Duty, appeal to his *Justice*, as well as to his *Goodness*, to make suitable Requitals; which he will most certainly perform, tho' not in *Kind*, yet in what will be much more for our *Advantage*; and will consult, tho' not our present Satisfaction, yet

our lasting Benefit. An *Observation* therefore *of God's returns to our Prayers*, *Thanksgiving for his Grants and Deliberations*, *a due Value of the Privilege of Prayer*, *a Correcting our Prayers for the future by our past disappointments*, and lastly *Almsgiving*, are necessary after we have pray'd, to make our antecedent Prayers duly effectual. So that I shall proceed to enquire into,

Lastly, What Acts are to be continued and extended through each of these, both before, in, and after our Prayers.

And, First, We ought to be possest with a great sense of our Imperfections in the discharge of this weighty Duty. This must run through all the parts of it; but ought more particularly to be exprest both before, and after our Devotions. At both these times we ought solemnly to entreat God's Pardon for the Errors that we have, or may commit; for the stragling of our Thoughts, which the best of Men can more easily bewail, than prevent; since the most watchful and steady Mind cannot hinder all the disorders of a roving Fancy,

in the midst of our most serious Devotions; for our over-earnest begging of Blessings of a trivial Nature, or for our want of any of the former *Qualifications*, in that measure which is expedient.

The next *Qualification* is a very comprehensive one, and which takes in all the rest, yet withal a very necessary one too; and that is universal Holiness and Sanctity. For our Praying in a short time will make us leave off our Sins, or our Sins our Prayers. So that this will be an Effect, as well as a Qualification of our Devotion. For tho' the former Qualifications may be sufficient for a new Convert, and for one who has but lately had the sence and conviction of Religion upon his Mind; yet from a Proficient in this Duty, nothing will be accepted less than a general, a compleat and uniform Obedience to all God's Commands. For tho' the Prayers of one who begins to leave his Sins, and yet sometimes upon the prevalency of Custom, or the surprize of a violent Temptation, relapses into 'em, may be heard upon his Repentance; yet this state of Sinning and Repenting

 must

seem before his Almighty Maker, than what is utter'd by, or rather impress'd upon a Soul, cast into a purely passive State or Posture; into a State of Expectation of the Divine Emanations to enlighten the Mind, as that Duty has been model'd by some late foreign * *Enthusiasts*. Which is but what had been before advanc'd by *Enthusiasts* of our own Nation: for thus an † Author of great Character, amongst the most irregular Sect which ever oppos'd this Church, allows of no use of our own Intellectual Powers, of our Passions, Imaginations, or Wills, in the exercise of this Duty: *Because* (says he) *God will be serv'd with his own alone, and not with any thing in Man, which is come in since the Fall; so the Imaginations, Thinkings and Conceivings are shut out.* And these *Qualifications* before hinted at, seem much more intelligible, more adapted to the Oeconomy of our Devotion, than * *The taking hold of essential Truth nakedly, as it is in it self*; than *the applying the Mind to the intelligible World, the World of Truth*; than *the addressing to the Ideal World*; than † *the union with God, the seeing of all things in God*:

* *Molinos*, Madame de *Bourignon*, &c.

† *James Naylor's* Love to the Lost, p. 13.

* † *Norris's* Reflections on the Conduct of Humane Life, &c. *Sect.* 11.

† *Entretiens Christiennes, & de la*

God. Termsin some measure invented by two refin'd and curious Thinkers, the one of our own, the other of a Neighbouring Kingdom. And here I cannot but reflect on a dangerous Error of a *Mystick* Writer of late, which seems to exclude Virtue from the State of *transform'd Souls*, (as he stiles them) and those wrap'd up in the highest trances of Devotion. But that Virtue is not only a preparation for Devotion, but also a compleating of it, has been shewn in this *Discourse*; and not only so, but that it is practic'd by the Blessed, by whom Devotion is exercis'd in its most exalted flights, was made out (tho' far below the Majesty of the Subject,) in the preceding *Essay*.

But to close all: Furnish'd with the former *Qualifications*, we may be justly said to *Pray always*, and *in the Spirit*. Yet such Prayers as were before describ'd, will never fail of Success, till God shall cease from being True, and our Almighty's Strength from being Merciful. Such Prayers as these will be acceptable Sacrifices to the Heavenly Altar, will procure Pardon for Sin,

and Encreases of Grace, and at length Eternall Life, and will at last expire into Everlasting Thanksgiving. When we shall need to Pray no more; but this Duty (by some fancy of Faith and Hope) shall cease, and we shall have nothing to do for ever, but to give *Thanks, Adore* and *Praise*.

AN

AN ESSAY UPON MELCHIZEDEC.

OR,

A Parallel between the Priesthood of CHRIST and Melchizedec.

THERE are scarcely any purely Historical Passages of Scripture, which carry the appearance of greater Obscurity, or have had more various Senses put upon them, than those which regard *Melchizedec*. Tho' who this Person was, has been a Controverted Point, and perhaps ever will be so, (for Controversies do not end with the first Authors of them;) yet that Christ is paralell'd with him, in his Priestly

Priestly Office, is as evident as the other part is dark and intricate. I shall therefore endeavour to give a view, both of the obscure and bright side of this Subject, by making some transient Remarks, both on the *Person* and the *Parallel*; by

First, Enquiring who *Melchizedec* is.

Secondly, Into the Nature of his Priesthood.

Thirdly, I shall parallel Christ with him in this Priesthood.

First, I shall enquire who *Melchizedec* is.

No mention is made of this holy Person, save in the 14*th* Chapter of *Genesis*, and in the 110*th Psalm*, except what the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says of him, which is wholly taken from thence. Thus little being spoken of him, has been the foundation of so many Opinions. But all that has been rationally delivered about him, may be reduc'd to Five Heads. The first Notion is that of the *Jews*, who make *Melchizedec* the same with the Patriarch *Sem*: for they paying the greatest Honour to *Abraham*, of whom they said that he was their Fa-

Father, resented it ill, that he should give Tithe to a *Priest* of an higher Order. To wipe off which blemish, they first declare *Melchizedec* to be an Angel, and in after-times the Patriarch *Sem*, and that he blessed *Abraham* as his great Grand-son; thus thinking to secure the repute of their Nation.

But that *Melchizedec* was not the Patriarch *Sem*, may be made plain. First, Because the Apostle says, that his Descent was not counted, being *without Descent*; but the Pedigree of *Sem* may be traced down from *Adam*, and stands upon eternal Record. Secondly, *Melchizedec* is said to be *without Father* and *without Mother*; but the Scripture gives us a large History of *Noah* the Father of *Sem*. Thirdly, The Order of *Melchizedec* was different from the Levitical Order; but the Priesthood of *Sem* must be the same with that of *Levi*, because *Levi* was descended in a right Line from *Sem*. More than this, Fourthly, the Apostle prefers the Order of *Melchizedec* to the Order of *Aaron*, or the Levitical Order; because *Levi* paid Tithes to him in *Abraham*. Which Argument would be null, if *Melchizedec* and

and *Sem* were the same, for then would *Levi*, who was equally descended from *Sem* and *Abraham*, pay Tithes in the latter, and receive them in the former: so no Preference could be hence concluded, which I take to be a strong Argument against this Opinion.

The second Opinion is that of *Cyrus*, who makes *Melchizedec* the same with Christ; or that it was our Savior assuming a human Shape, who appear'd to *Abraham*. But this is highly improbable: for how can he be said to be without Father and without Mother, whose Father is the *Almighty*, whose Mother the *Blessed above all Women*, the holy and immaculate Virgin? This was far below the sublime and accurate style of the Apostle's Rhetorick. Farther, If *Melchizedec* was Christ, it would follow that Christ was Priest when he appear'd to *Abraham*, long before the Law. But the Apostle says, that he was made one *after the Law, with an Oath*. Nor can there be any rational Account given of our Saviour's appearing in a human Body, before his Incarnation. For the Apostle St. *Paul* alluding to those places where God is said

* *Cyr.* de *Repub. Hebræor.* lib. 3. c. 3.

† v. the first Discourse.

said to appear, makes mention only of Angels appearing, or that some had hospitably entertain'd them unawares. But if these Angels had been Jesus Christ, or God Almighty, St. *Paul* might have run his Argument higher, or have asserted in the honour of Hospitality, that some had not only entertain'd Angels, but God Almighty Himself unawares. So that *Melchizedec* could not be Jesus Christ.

The third Opinion is, That this *Melchizedec* was a Man of mortal Extraction, and King of *Salem* at that time when *Abraham* came from his Victory. And this is honour'd with no lesser Names, than those of *Irenæus*, *Hippolytus*, the two *Eusebii*, *Cæsariensis*, and *Emissenus*, *Apollinarius*, *Eustathius*, Bp of *Antioch*, as they are quoted by St. *Jerom*, who all conspire in saying, that *Melchizedec* was an Inhabitant of *Canaan*, and King of *Jerusalem*, which was first called *Salem*, then *Jebus*, lastly *Jerusalem*. But notwithstanding these venerable Authors, (with whom yet St. *Jerom* himself does not agree,) there is reason to believe that *Melchizedec* was not King of *Salem* in *Canaan*; for the

* *Hieronym.* Epist. ad *Evagrium.* Tom. 3 p. 78. Edit. Basil. 1537.

place

place where *Abraham* gain'd this celebrated Victory, was not in *Canaan*, as appears from the whole Progress of his Motions, compar'd with the exact Tables of *Adricomius*, as has been demonstrated by one of the greatest * Persons in our Nation, as famous for his incomparable Treatises in *Divinity*, as for those in ancient and modern *Mathematicks*. Farther, If *Melchizedec* was King of *Salem* in *Canaan*, how could *Abraham* be unknown to him, till this Expedition of his? Or how came it that a Correspondence was not settled between them before this, being both Worshippers and Priests of the True God, and living among Idolatrous Nations, at a small distance from each other? Nor, Fourthly, was *Melchizedec* the Holy Ghost, assuming an human Shape then, as he did afterwards those of a *Dove*, and fiery Tongues, as † some have extravagantly thought; since most of those Arguments which prove that he was not the Second Person in the Trinity, make it as evident that he was not the Third. But, Fifthly, it seems most probable, that he was some Person of extraordinary Piety in those

* Dr. *Wallis* in his Disc. concerning *Melchizedec*.

† S. *Hieron.* ut supra.

or

by the Neighbouring Countries, where *Abraham* had been pursuing his Conquests, who had preserv'd true Notions of God and Morality, and therefore was initiated by Divine Emanations from above. To strengthen which, I shall produce these two following Remarks:

First, That Piety and Goodness were never so much banisht out of the World, but there have flourish'd some Asserters and rigid Maintainers of them. The Light of Nature has not been so far extinguish'd, but it has had the power to conduct some by its brightness, and to teach them to act up to the highest Rules of Justice, Candor and Humanity. Of this kind, among prophane Nations, were *Tobacis*, *Anacharsis*, *Solon*, *Socrates*, *Aristides*, and others; and among the *Canaanites*, *Abraham* and *Lot*; and among other idolatrous Nations, *Job* and *Job*'s King of *Salem*.

The second Remark to establish my Assertion, is, That the Royalty and Priesthood were generally combin'd in those Nations, and the Crown and Mitre (if I may so call it) both adorn'd this same Head. Thus the Heroes in

Homer,

Homer, *Apollonius* in his *Argonauts*, and *Virgil*, are brought in Sacrificing. And (1) *Heliodorus* makes the *Æthiopian* Kings, (2) *Plutarch* the *Egyptian*, (3) *Herodotus* the *Spartan*, *Libyan* and *Roman*, to be Priests too, and wear the Pontifical Dignity, as well as the Regal. The Emperors for four hundred Years after *Julius Cæsar*, had the Title of *Pontifex Maximus*, even under Christianity. And the 6th General Council, when it drove the Laicks from the Altar, reserv'd the place for the Emperor. And as to *Melchizedec* being *without Father and without Mother*, it may be so understood, That he had no Father and Mother, which stood in the Records, as the Patriarchs had; or perhaps, That his Father and Mother were not of the Royal Race, so that he was the first King of his Family, as *Jeconias* is said to be without Children, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, because he had none who succeeded him in his Throne, tho' he had a Son *Salathiel*, whether a natural Son, or adopted; tho' there are some Assertors of the first, as well as of the second. And indeed notwithstanding what the matchless * *Grotius* has said on the other

(1) *Hel. Rerum Æthiopic. lib. ult.*

(2) *Plutarc. Placit Philosophorum.*

(3) *Herod. in Clio.*

* *Grot. in v. Luc. 23. 3 p. 651.*

other side, it seems probable that *Salathiel* was his Son by Nature. Because first, this Curse of being *Childless*, might only be Conditional, in case that he did not repent. But there was a Tradition among the *Jews*, which * *Rabbi Kimchi* mentions, that *Jeconiah* repented in Prison. Secondly, The *Hebrew* word *Childless*, is render'd by *Aquila*, *not prospering* or *encreasing*; by the seventy-two Interpreters, ἐκκηρυκτὸν; by *Symmachus*, *empty*. Thirdly, The very next words of the Prophet *Jeremy* seem to imply, that he had Seed: for *no man of his seed shall prosper*.

* v. R. D. Kimchi Rad. in vec. עדד.

Jer. 22. 31.

But to return: From what has been discours'd we may gather, that it was common from the first Ages of the World, that the same Person should be both King and Priest. I shall proceed to enquire,

Secondly, Into the Nature of *Melchizedec*'s Priesthood.

And to understand this, we must examine the Nature of that Law which he presided over by his Sacerdotal Function, and according to which he was a Priest. Now this Law was the Law

of Nature, improv'd by some Traditions, which might be handed down from *Adam* to *Noah*, and from him to the Age of *Abraham*. For this is all the Law that was given to *Adam* in *Paradise*, unless we make the Law of restraining the eating of the forbidden Fruit a positive Law. If he had observ'd this, he should have still maintain'd his Innocence, and thereby his Happiness. Happy State of Innocence! which had not much more to distinguish it from Heaven it self, but only that it wanted Continuance. *At sunt ingens gloria!* for *Adam* forfeiting his Integrity, had his clear Notions of this pure Law in a great measure defac'd. What he had left, or what was farther reveal'd to him, was in some proportion brought down to the times of *Melchizedec*, and according to this Law was he a Priest. By this Law he, and those under his Jurisdiction, were instructed to worship one God, to swear by his holy Name, to give him due Honour, to make Vows by him, to gather religious Assemblies, to raise Altars, to build Temples, to do to others as they would desire others should do to them.

By

By this Rule lived *Enoch*, and so pleased God, that he was translated into Heaven. By this acted *Abraham*, after he had forsaken his Idolatry, after he had burnt his Father's Gods, and made them a pleasing Sacrifice to the True One. And we cannot but receive high *Idea's* of this august Priest, to whom the Son of God himself was made like. No question but the innocence of his Life, and the fervour of his Devotion, far outvied the best and most pious of his Age. There is indeed a seeming difficulty in those Expressions, which affirm that he had *neither beginning of days, nor end of life*, and that he *abideth a Priest continually*: but if by a Metaschematism natural enough, we translate what is here said of the Person or Priest, to the Priesthood or Law themselves, all will appear very easy. For these Rules of Natural Religion are eternal, had no beginning of Sanction, nor end of Obligation; but being the everlasting dictates of Right Reason, are immortal and never to be abrogated, as the Jewish Law and Priesthood were; but shall remain even in Heaven it self, as was shewn in a former Discourse.

This Law is ingeniously styl'd by *Philo*, the Law stampt on the immortal Mind of God. And some of the *Schoolmen* are so extravagant as to assert, that it was before the Will of God it self, before Eternity. Such was *Melchizedec*, such the Nature of his Priesthood. But,

Thirdly, Christ was a Priest after his Order.

For Christ, as a divine Restorer of the eternal Law, recover'd it to its original Splendor, after it had been a long time obscur'd by Prejudice and Vice. He form'd a Religion, which was nothing else but a digest of the Rules of Right Reason. For what is the Gospel, consider'd without the Commands of Believing, and of the Sacraments, but the Law of Nature? Every thing practical is enjoin'd by that Law. Those hard and severe Precepts, of returning good for evil, of dying for what we think to be our Duty, have not only been commended, but also practic'd by noble *Heathens*, who only mov'd by the Law of Nature. What is our Saviour's excellent Sermon on the Mount, but a Scheme of natural Principles?

The

The whole design of it is, to recover Right Reason from those foolish Traditions, by which the *Pharisees* had darken'd it. The Virtues which are there enjoin'd, Meekness, Humility, Justice, Purity of Spirit, Charity, so extensive as even to love our Enemies, are all branches of the natural Law. *Moses* and the Prophets of old among the *Jews*, and the Philosophers among the *Heathens*, were propagators of this Law: but what was taught by the former, was not so clear, tho' as perfect, as was before shewn; what by the latter, neither was so clear nor perfect, as what was perform'd by our Saviour. The Philosophers (if I may so speak) design'd the first Sketches and Out-lines; but he drew the Lineaments and true Symmetry of this majestical Piece. To evince that our Saviour's aim was to retrieve the Law of Nature, you may observe, that when Christ endeavour'd to correct the Mistakes of the *Jews* about Divorce, he refers them to the original Institution of Marriage, by the Law of Nature; which Rule may also hold in the case of Polygamy, tho' dispenc'd with in regard to the Patriarchs.

So that we may conclude, that our Saviour's intention, as he was a *Melchizedecian* Priest, was to reduce the Law of Nature to its original purity, that it might nearly resemble what was enjoin'd *Adam* in his Innocence. The whole World being divided into *Jew* and *Gentile*, tho' very unequally, both of them had miserably torture'd the Law of Nature; so that our Saviour's charitable Hand was necessary to assert it to its native Liberty. For the Ritual Law of *Moses* was an heavy Yoke, and there could be no true Liberty, but under the Law of Nature, (which is also the Law of God,) which only restrains us from what is truly ill, or really hurtful. This therefore is a common foundation of the Priesthood of Christ, and that of *Melchizedec*, That they both of them eminently adorn'd the Law of Nature, tho' the former did it with a distinguishing Glory. Christ indeed is a Priest for ever, after a way which cannot be apply'd to *Melchizedec*; that is, by entering into Heaven, and offering himself a Sacrifice devoted for our Sins; and by the Virtue of this Sacrifice, presenting himself before God as our high

Priest,

Priest, he still pleads in our behalf. *Melchizedec* did Sacrifice, and that not only with Bread and Wine, as * some suppose, but also with bloody Victims, suitable to the practice of that Age. But Christ only made one Sacrifice, that of himself, by which he put a period to all Sacrifices, except the offering up *our Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service*; alluding perhaps to what the *Jews* said of *Adam*, that *He was before sin all ever a Sacrifice*. To this Parallel between the two Priesthoods it ought to be refer'd, That the Christians, like *Melchizedec* who was both King and Priest, are styl'd *a Royal Priesthood*. And the Author to the *Revelations* tells us, that *Christ has made us Kings and Priests, an holy Priesthood to offer a spiritual Sacrifice*. Several of the Fathers deny that *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and others of the Patriarchs, ever kept any Sabbath: and there is an ancient Maxim of the *Jews*, that *All the days of the Messiah shall be one Sabbath*, to shew the Piety of that happy Age, that should consecrate every Day to the Almighty.

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But to finish this Comparison: *Melchizedec* was Priest of the most high God, for the Name *Jehovah* was not yet known. He banish'd all superstitious Worship from his Kingdom, and instituted a pure Religion, agreeable to the Laws of Nature. The Religion of *Jesus Christ* in like manner triumph'd over Idolatry, and wheresoever it appear'd, gave a total stroke to *Polytheism*. So groundless was that Calumny of the Jews, which makes *Jesus* descended not from *Abraham*, the true worshipper of God; but from the idolatrous *Thera*, whose Practice they make him to transcribe. Thus just is the *Parallel* between the two *Priesthoods*.

AN ESSAY Upon the *General Resurrection.*

TO make my Thoughts more regular on this noble, tho' common Subject, I shall offer to prove,

First, That there shall be a *Resurrection* of the Body.

Secondly, That it shall be of the Body only.

Thirdly, That it shall be of the *same* Body from which the Soul was separated.

First then, There shall be a *Resurrection* of the Body. Where I shall prove,

First, That such a *Resurrection* has not any thing in it, which carries the appearance of an Impossibility.

Secondly, That it is in it self very pro-

probable and ſuitable to the Rules of true Reaſon. And

Thirdly, That upon the proſpects of the divine Promiſes and Predictions, it is certain and beyond all queſtion firm.

Firſt, The *Reſurrection* of the Body has not any thing in it, which carries the appearance of an Impoſſibility. For if the Reſurrection is impoſſible, it is becauſe that either the *Power* which is to perform this miraculous Act, has not force enough to accompliſh it; or becauſe the *Subject* about which it is employ'd, is not capable to be rais'd after this wonderful manner. But neither of theſe are true: for tho' neither Man nor Angel could raiſe a dead Body, yet it is within the compaſs of the *Divine Power*. For,

Firſt, The Deity knows where the Particles and Atoms of the Bodies of the Dead are repos'd, in what ſecret Cells they are lodg'd, and what Changes they have run through ſince their ſeparation from the Soul.

Secondly, He can aſſemble theſe ſcatter'd Parts, and unite them in their former harmony and beauty.

Thirdly, He can command the Soul back

back to its ancient abode, call it from Bliss or Woe, to resume its former Partner; so that *these dry Bones* shall *live*, and become the same Man they were before their Dissolution.

And, *First*, the Deity knows where the Particles and Atoms of the Bodies of the Dead are repos'd, in what secret Cells they are lodg'd, and what Changes they have run through since their separation from the Soul.

For God understands all the invisible Passages of Nature, and every small part of a Body, and can trace it thro' all its turns and shapes, whatsoever outward Frame it may assume. He knows where the remains of the first *righteous Sacrifice*, the first Example of Mortality, (which all Mortals must transcribe,) are dispos'd of, as well as those of the last Man, who shall be obnoxious to the Curse, and shall be the last of those who shall return to Dust. For whatsoever visible Figure our mortal Body may be invested with, to Him it is undisguis'd and confesses it self. The finest Glasses can only help us to the sight of the Surface, and external Contexture of some Bodies, while several

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Upon the *General Resurrection.*

TO make my Thoughts more regular on this noble, tho' common Subject, I ſhall offer to prove,

Firſt, That there ſhall be a *Reſurrection* of the Body.

Secondly, That it ſhall be of the Body only.

Thirdly, That it ſhall be of the *ſame* Body from which the Soul was ſeparated.

Firſt then, There ſhall be a *Reſurrection* of the Body. Where I ſhall prove,

Firſt, That ſuch a *Reſurrection* has not any thing in it, which carries the appearance of an Impoſſibility.

Secondly, That it is in it ſelf very pro-

probable and ſuitable to the Rules of true Reaſon. And

Thirdly, That upon the proſpects of the divine Promiſes and Predictions, it is certain and beyond all queſtion firm.

Firſt, The *Reſurrection* of the Body has not any thing in it, which carries the appearance of an Impoſſibility. For if the Reſurrection is impoſſible, it is becauſe that either the *Power* which is to perform this miraculous Act, has not force enough to accompliſh it; or becauſe the *Subject* about which it is employ'd, is not capable to be rais'd after this wonderful manner. But neither of theſe are true: for tho' neither Man nor Angel could raiſe a dead Body, yet it is within the compaſs of the *Divine Power*. For,

Firſt, The Deity knows where the Particles and Atoms of the Bodies of the Dead are repos'd, in what ſecret Cells they are lodg'd, and what Changes they have run through ſince their ſeparation from the Soul.

Secondly, He can aſſemble theſe ſcatter'd Parts, and unite them in their former harmony and beauty.

Thirdly, He can command the Soul back

back to its ancient abode, call it from Bliss or Woe, to resume its former Partner; so that *these dry Bones* shall *live*, and become the same Man they were before their Dissolution.

And, First, the Deity knows where the Particles and Atoms of the Bodies of the Dead are repos'd, in what secret Cells they are lodg'd, and what Changes they have run through since their separation from the Soul.

For God understands all the invisible Passages of Nature, and every small part of a Body, and can trace it thro' all its turns and shapes, whatsoever outward Frame it may assume. He knows where the remains of the first *righteous Sacrifice*, the first Example of Mortality, (which all Mortals must transcribe,) are dispos'd of, as well as those of the last Man, who shall be obnoxious to the Curse, and shall be the last of those who shall return to Dust. For whatsoever visible Figure our mortal Body may be invested with, to Him it is undisguis'd and confesses it self. The finest Glasses can only help us to the sight of the Surface, and external Contexture of some Bodies, while several

veral others may be of so nice and accurate a Frame, as no more to be discover'd by them, than by the Eye without their assistance. But nothing can be so minute, as to *lie hid from* the Understanding of God, no more than any thing can be so glorious as to *surpass* it. As in his Book all *our Members* were *written*, which *in continuance were fashion'd*, when *as yet there was none of them*; so every Atom which belongs to us is known to Him who made us. Tho' (in the Prophet's Language) *we go down to the bottoms of the Mountains, and the Earth with her Bars is about us; or tho' we are cast into the deep, in the midst of the Seas, and the Floods compass us about, and his Billows and Waves pass over us*; even this Darkness hides us not from Him, but every Particle lies open to his view. As God knows where the Atoms of the Bodies of the Dead are repos'd, so

Secondly, He can assemble these scatter'd Parts, and unite them in their former harmony and beauty.

He who could make Man out of the Dust, and employ'd such a Profusion of Wisdom and Goodness on the liveless Clay, as to advance it into the *Image of God*,

God, can surely restore the dissolv'd Fabrick, and in the noble Expression of Scripture, make our *Bones flourish like an Herb*. He can summon and re-call Mans divided Atoms from the Earth and from the Waves, and reconcile their long estrang'd Parts to their ancient familiarity; where they shall fall into their primitive Order and Situation, after the separation, in some, for thousands of Years. Tho' some among several Nations, either out of a wild and salvage Barbarity, or out of the most pressing necessity, (of which we have a mournful Instance in the Siege of *Samaria* in Scripture,) seem, if it is possible, to disappoint a Resurrection of other Mens Bodies, by making them the Nourishment of their own; yet God who knows where all those Particles abide, which ever did belong to any Man's Body, can call them from their secret Repositories, to compleat the Body made imperfect by this unnatural Cruelty, in order to be enliven'd by the Soul. 2 *King.* 6. v. 26.

Thirdly, God can command the Soul back to its ancient abode, call it from Bliss or Woe, to resume its former Part-

ner;

ner; so that *these dry Bones* shall *live*, and become the same Man they were before their Dissolution. And this must appear very easy: for the Soul loses nothing by the separation from the Body, as the Body does by being parted from the Soul. This piece of Divinity within us owes no homage to the Elements, nor is liable to be chang'd as they are. As to the Souls of the Blessed, they pay a constant attendance before the Throne of Grace, and are always expecting the joyful Command, by which they are oblig'd to a re-union. And as to the Souls of the Unhappy, they shall be forced unwillingly to re-inspire their unwelcome Mansions, to animate once more those Parts, which, as in torture'd Men, are only new set and compacted to be tormented anew. As there is nothing in the *Resurrection* of the Body, which carries the appearance of an Impossibility, so

Secondly, It is in it self very probable and suitable to the Rules of true Reason. The ancient *Apologists* of Christianity defending it against the *Heathens*, usually shew'd the probability of a *Resurrection*, from some Parallels in the

Works

Works of Nature. Thus the * Springs rising so gloriously from the Winter, and the Day from the Night, the most beautiful Offsprings from the most deform'd Parents, were by their pious Rhetorick exalted into some kinds of Proofs, as well as Types of the *Resurrection*. But these are not so much Evidences of, as handsom Allusions to this great Truth, in order to take off that Contempt with which the *Heathens* entertain'd this new and surprizing Doctrin. Tho' the order of Effects and Changes in Nature, furnish us not with any thing which may make the *Resurrection* probable; yet the just view of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, as it is discover'd by the Light of Reason, will make it appear very suitable to it. For tho' it is not agreeable to the Divine Wisdom, to raise up Mankind, only to make them capable of acting over again all that scene of Folly, Ill-nature, Vanity and Vice, which they live obnoxious to now; yet to command them back to a Life which is truly heavenly, glorious and happy, in which they are made fit for so glorious a Being as God Himself, to take delight

* *Tertull. de Resurr. &c.*

in, is a design worthy a wise and good Creator, who certainly made Man for some nobler Ends, than what he can arrive to in this State of Mortality. The chief design (as seems evident to the Light of Nature it self) for God to create Man, was to communicate his own Goodness, and to presentiate an order of Objects to himself, which bearing his own Image, and being endued with Reason, might still glorify his Name, and yield him back some faint Reflexion of Himself. If so, since God *Is* to all Eternity, why should he not desire a Presentiation of these Objects to all Eternity? Why should he not be willing to be glorify'd, and to have this sort of Reflexion of Himself made back to all Eternity? And since God has laid the Laws of Morality and Religion on the Body, as well as on the Soul; since that is oblig'd to Purity and an humble Adoration, as well as this to Virtues peculiar to its Nature; why should God be fancy'd, to be so wholly taken up with this, as not in the least to be concern'd for that? Why should he change the State of the Blessed, and divest them of that, which properly makes

up

up their Humanity, by refining them into a pure Spirit? As the *Resurrection* is thus probable, ſo is it

Thirdly, Upon the proſpects of the Divine Promiſes and Predictions certain, and (beyond all queſtion) firm. It was obſcurely predicted ever ſince the very Fall of Man, and darkly imply'd in the Promiſe of the *Meſſias*, who was to be a Redeemer of the Body, as well as of the Soul. As the firſt Man was made with all the Perfections due to his Body as well as to his Soul; ſo he who ſhould repair what Man loſt by his Fall, muſt reſtore him the Excellencies of that, as well as of this. And tho' the Revelation of a Reſurrection to the *Jews*, was not ſo clear as to put it beyond all doubt, and to make it a ſtrict Article of Faith; yet are there ſeveral Texts in the *Old Teſtament*, which are manifeſt Alluſions to it, and tacit Proofs of it. Thus *Moſes* introduces God ſpeaking: *See now, that I, even I, am He; I kill and I make alive.* And thus *Iſaiah* with his uſual height of Language: *Thy Dead ſhall live, together with my dead Body ſhall they ariſe. Awake and ſing ye that dwell in the Duſt; for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the*

Earth shall cast out the Dead. To which may be subjoin'd that remarkable place of *Job: Though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for my self, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.* Tho' the excellent *Grotius* applies these Words to his Temporal restitution, or at most to discover his Expectation of a future State alone; yet they seem at least to allude to the Hopes which he had of a *Resurrection.* As to that place which our Saviour quotes from *Exodus, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; they appear only in general to prove the Immortality of the Soul, and to shew that these Patriarchs were not in a State of Annihilation; tho' with particular regard to the *Sadducees*, against whom they were urg'd, they are a just and matchless Argument for a *Resurrection.* For they scrupled only the Immortality of the Soul; and if they could conceive that the Soul could exist independent of the Body, they could grant that it might be re-united to it. For they were of the same Opinion in that Age, which the followers of *Spinosa* and Mr. *Hobbes* main-

maintain in ours, That what *Is*, is Material, excepting God alone: in which fundamental Point of Natural Religion, of God's being a Spirit, those ancient *Scepticks* were much more Orthodox than our modern ones. But how obscure soever the Doctrin of the *Resurrection* might be under the Revelation of the *Old Testament*, yet under the *New* this Article is deliver'd with all the light and demonstrative force imaginable. The whole stress of the Gospel is, as it were, repos'd upon it; and because it look'd strange and surprizing to the unbelieving World, it is enforc'd with greater Arguments, repeated with more frequency. To mention only one remarkable place of our Saviour's: *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in their Graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done Good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* As this was a considerable part of our Saviour's Preaching, so he confirm'd it by his own Example, by rising from the Dead himself, and so by virtually raising those which are his. For, *If the Spirit of*

him which rais'd Chriſt from the Dead dwell in us, he that rais'd Chriſt from the Dead, ſhall alſo quicken our mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. So that a *Reſurrection* of the Body is not only poſſible and highly probable, but upon the proſpects of the Divine Promiſes and Predictions certain. As there ſhall thus be a *Reſurrection* of the Body, ſo

Secondly, This *Reſurrection* ſhall be of the Body only.

And this Reſtriction is neceſſary to the overthrowing of an Opinion, That the Souls of Men periſh with their Bodies, but yet ſo, that both ſhould be rais'd again at the laſt Day; That they ſhould both ſleep in Darkneſs, till the laſt Alarm, and ſhould both riſe again at the finiſhing of all Things. This Opinion was firſt ſtarted by ſome *Arabian* Biſhops, (as we are inform'd by *Euſebius*, St. *Auſtin*, and *Nicephorus*,) and has been more vigorouſly in later times defended by great Pretenders to Reaſon. Thus * *Smalcius* concludes, *That the Souls of the Saints are in a ſtate of Sleep, and ſuffer a kind of Annihilation, and therefore are to be rais'd with the Body.*

* *Exam.* 157 *Err.* p. 49. ſingle Edit.

That

That † *it is doubtful whether the Spirit, when it is parted from the Body, can perceive any thing; and whether it is capable of Pleaſure, till it is join'd with the glorify'd Body.* And in another * place he expreſly denies *the Soul's reſenting any Pleaſure or Trouble without the Body.* Thus *Crellius* in his * Treatiſe concerning God and the Divine Attributes, defines Angels in oppoſition to Men, to be *Spirits ſo perfect, that they can ſubſiſt and act without a Body*; whereas an human Soul cannot. And it may perhaps be enquir'd, Whether the ingenious *Hypotheſes* of late, which have ſeem'd to level the diſtinction between different Species of Subſtance, and ſo to break down the Boundaries between Spirit and Body, have not help'd to abet this Opinion. But to reply to this Fancy concerning the *Sleep of the Soul*:

† *Contra Franzium*, p. 409.

* *Contra emiglec. de Err. Arian.* c. 14. p. 149.

* c. 19. p. 134.

In our Saviour's account of the different Fates of *Lazarus* and the Rich Man, we find that the former was immediately convey'd to Bliſs, and the latter to Miſery. And granting that this is only a *Parable*, or general Reſemblance, (yet that it was an Hiſtory of things truly tranſacted, is the Opi-

nion of * several of extraordinary Note;) yet the main design of it must be founded upon the Nature of Things, and must shew that the distance is extreamly small, between the Soul's quitting the Body, and its being transported to its final State. Thus the Penitent Thief, who was Crucify'd with our Saviour, ascends forthwith after his Death, from the Pains and Tortures of the Cross, to the Joys of Paradise. This *Sleep*, or Rest of the Soul, is chiefly grounded upon that usual Metaphor in Holy Writ, by which Death is resembled to *Sleep*. But the Scripture does not apply it to the Soul, but the Body resting in the Grave, that it may be awaken'd to a Resurrection. For this would be wholly inconsistent with the Apostle's Assertion, where he says, that *While we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord*; and that *so soon as we are departed out of the Body, we shall be present with the Lord*. For *to be with the Lord*, must imply a state of Felicity, which Sleep is not, but only of Inactivity; and the Apostle's Argument would lose its force, and would be no encouragement against the Terrours of Death,

* *Ambros. in Luc. Tertull.* lib. 4. *contra* Marcion. *Hilar. Enarrat. in Psalm.*

Death, if ſo ſoon as we are dead, we ſhould fall aſleep, ſink into a Condition of Inſenſibility, and till the *Reſurrection* Be, as if we were not at all. The Soul therefore is not rais'd with the Body, but is call'd from a ſtate of Bliſs or Woe, to which it was remov'd immediately upon its ſeparation from it, to reſume its ancient Manſion. As this *Reſurrection* is of the Body only, ſo

Thirdly, This *Reſurrection* ſhall be of the ſame Body, from which the Soul was ſeparated.

Which Concluſion bears a direct oppoſition to the *Socinian* Doctrin, which affirms, either that *the Body ſome time before the Reſurrection ſhall be* * *annihilated by a Divine Power*; or *if it is not thus annihilated, yet that God will only raiſe a* † *certain quantity of Matter, ſufficient to make up the Bodies of all Mankind, and promiſcuouſly infuſe the Souls into it, after that he has Organiz'd it fit for their reception.* But that the Bodies of the Dead ſhall be annihilated ſome time before the *Reſurrection*, is both againſt Revelation, and againſt (what ſome of our Adverſaries ſeem more to

* *Smalc. Exam.* 100. *Err.* p. 33. *de Divinit. Chriſti*, c. 13. p. 79.

† *Exam.* 100. *Err.* p. 36.

admire) *Philosophy.* 'Tis against Philosophy, for the Divine *Plato* stiles Death, Ψυχῆς καὶ Σώματος λύσις, καὶ μακαρισμὸς, which only supposes a separation of both parts, not an Annihilation of either. Thus in another place he affirms,* *That when Death arrives, the Fibres and Strings by which the Soul acted, break and untwist, just like the Rudder-bands of a Ship, and she* [that is, the Soul] *is left alone to roam at liberty and at random.* Against Revelation; for the Scripture calls Death, a *returning to Dust*, a *seeing of Corruption*, a *sleeping*. Now that which *returns to Dust*, which is *corrupted*, which *sleeps* in the secret Repositories of Nature, cannot be in a State of Non-existence. It must have a Being, how ignoble soever it is, and how much soever changed from what it was in its State of Life. Nor, secondly, is any other Matter rais'd and united to the Soul besides what fell. How hard soever it is to settle the bounds of *Identity*; and granting those Instances of *Self-consciousness* being united to all those different Subjects, to make the *same* Person, (which one of the greatest Philosophers of our Age, in his † *Essay concerning Human Under-*

* ἡνίκα ἡ τελευτὴ παραστῇ λύεται τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς, οἱονεὶ νέως, πείσματα, μεθίεται τε αὐτὴ ἐλευθέρα. *Plato* in *Timæo*, tom. 3. p. 72. Edit. *Serrani.*

† v. Lock's *Essay.* Book 2. Chap. 27.

Underſtanding, hints at;) yet this does not affect the *Identity* of the *Riſing Body*. For the Enquiry is not, Whether the *ſame Self-conſciouſneſs*, join'd to different Matter, makes the *ſame* Perſon; but Whether it is more ſuitable to the Doctrin of the *Reſurrection*, that God will raiſe the *ſame*, or another Matter, and unite it to the *ſame ſelf-conſcious* Principle. That God will raiſe the *ſame* Body which fell, ſeems moſt agreeable to Truth; for moſt of thoſe Arguments, which prove that the Body ſhall riſe at all, ſeem to manifeſt alſo, That the *ſame* Body ſhall riſe. For in the *Identity* of the *Riſing Body* is founded all the Right and Juſtice of Rewards and Puniſhments, Happineſs and Miſery, which regard the Body. For why ſhould Man be bleſt for thoſe Virtues in one Body, which he practic'd in another? Or why ſhould *this* Body be tortur'd for Crimes committed in *that*? Why ſhould God raiſe the Body from the ſame Grave in which it was at firſt repos'd, unleſs it was the *ſame* Body which was there at firſt repos'd? Tho' the Body ſhall be glorify'd and ſpiritualiz'd, yet it ſhall be the *ſame*. For if

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the Bodies of our firſt Parents could paſs from Immortality to Mortality, and yet continue the *ſame*, obnoxious to Puniſhment in *this*, for Sins committed in *that*; why may not the Reverſe of this be true, and Men from *Mortal* become *Immortal*, from *Corruptible* become *Incorruptible*, and yet abide the *ſame*?

I ſhall cloſe this *Eſſay* with making a ſhort Reflection on a Paſſage in a late Treatiſe written on this Subject, by the Learned Dr. *Hody*, to whoſe Merit I pay an extraordinary Deference; tho' I cannot in all things in this Point pay an Aſſent to his way of Reaſoning. He ſeems, without ſufficient Motive, to endeavour to overthrow the Arguments of the *Fathers*, by which they prove the *Identity* of the *Riſing Body*. The *Fathers* reaſon in ſhort, That ſince there is a relative combination between Soul and Body, ſince the Merit or Demerit of any Action is ſhar'd between them; that therefore they ſhall both appear the *ſame*, to receive Rewards or Puniſhments for their good or ill Actions. This method of Diſcourſe ſeems juſt and true, notwithſtanding

that

that the Learned Doctor says, that *The Arm that stabs, sins no more than the Sword, and 'tis the Soul only that is the Murderer.* This is a fine, abstracted, *Cartesian* way of talking; but would scarce be accepted in any Court of Justice, if a Murderer should plead it to his Judge, to exempt his Body from satisfying the Law. And this Notion seems to tend to confirm that, which some *Enthusiasts* not long since advanc'd; that *So long as we keep the Soul pure, we may do what we please with the Body.* To strengthen this the Doctor says, *That the Body is not capable of any Rewards or Punishments.* Why then, from this Argument, should the *same* Body rise? But certainly, tho' the Body can resent no Pleasure or Pain without the Soul, yet they in conjunction receive several Impressions of both, which the Soul could not perceive alone: therefore to make both perfectly happy or miserable, both must be rais'd, and both the *same.* The Doctor's last Argument is, That if all the bulk of the *same* Matter should rise, we should be *Monsters of Men* at the *Resurrection.* But the *Effluvia* (to answer this Objection)

Dr. Hody concerning the Resurrection of the *same* Body p. 210

Ibid.

jection) which make up this vast Mass, flow from the Carneous Parts, and from the Blood, which are not particularly concern'd in *Human* Actions: the former of which *Plato* (so much admir'd by the Doctor) calls only * *Wool or Down, to wrap the Body easily and softly round*; the latter the *Forrage and Pasturage of the Flesh*. But from the Vessels, Parts and Organs peculiarly serviceable to Life, Motion, Sense, Imagination, Understanding and Will, the *Effluvia* are inconsiderable; nor would they much surpass their due Dimensions, if all the Matter, which ever belong'd to them, were rais'd.

σάρξ ἔστι τὰ πιλητὰ σώμασι μαλακῶς καὶ πρόως ὑπείκοντα. *Plato* in *Timæo*.

AN

AN

ESSAY

Againſt

SCEPTICISM

In Matters of Religion.

IN order to endeavour to give ſome Check to the prevailing Humour of *Scepticiſm*, which is become ſo extreamly Modiſh, that no Perſon can be that ſelf-admir'd thing, a *Wit*, without it; I ſhall,

Firſt, (as is moſt natural,) propoſe a ſhort view of ſome of thoſe *pretended* Reaſons, which the *Scepticks* and *Deiſts*, and others of the ſame Order, uſually give for their *Scepticiſm* and Doubts about the Truths of Religion. To every one of which I ſhall return a tranſient Reply.

Secondly, I ſhall take a ſhort ſurvey of

of the *true* Reaſons and Motives, which make Men *Scepticks*.

Firſt, The *pretended* Reaſons are ſuch as theſe:

Firſt, They believe Religion to be falſe, becauſe many who make great ſhews of being Chriſtians, are only ſuch out of Intereſt, and in all likelyhood would change the Chriſtian Profeſſion for another, which would be more ſerviceable for their Deſigns.

Secondly, They have an ill Opinion of Religion, becauſe many who are zealous for its *Truths*, are yet negligent of the *Morals* of it, and live after ſuch a manner, as would make a ſober Heathen bluſh.

Thirdly, They deſpiſe Religion, becauſe ſeveral Profeſſors of it, embrace it not out of Reaſon or Conviction, but out of a ſupine Credulity, and walk blindly on in the Chriſtian Religion, only becauſe it is the Worſhip of their Country.

Fourthly, They entertain a low Idea of Chriſtianity, becauſe, tho' ſaid to be reveal'd for the good of all Mankind, yet God has only propagated it

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in a ſmall part of the World; and even where it has been promulg'd, it is found but an indifferent Expedient to work any ſuch extraordinary Effects on Mens Minds, as might be expected from a Religion, which God Himſelf came down from Heaven to preach, and to ſeal with his Blood.

Fifthly, That the Diviſions amongſt ſingle Chriſtians, and the Wars and Diſcords between Chriſtian Princes and Commonwealths, often heightned by Religious Controverſies, and inflam'd by the violent Harangues of Eccleſiaſtick Perſons, are great Prejudices againſt the Chriſtian Religion, and give a Moral *Deiſt* great Advantage over a Zealot for Chriſtianity.

Theſe have been, and ſtill are, ſome of the leading Forces in the Van of *Scepticiſm*. There are indeed many particular Objections laid againſt peculiar parts of Chriſtianity, which cannot fall within the compaſs of this ſhort ESSAY. But to return a curſory Reply to each one of theſe Objections.

Firſt, 'Tis no juſt Reflection upon the Religion, That many, who make great ſhews of being Chriſtians, are only

only ſuch out of Intereſt, and in all probability would change the Chriſtian Profeſſion for another, which would be more ſerviceable for their deſigns. Tho' ſome may be Chriſtians at preſent out of Intereſt, yet if we enquire into the firſt Inſtitution of our Religion, we ſhall find, that it was its intrinſick Worth which firſt recommended it to the World, when there was no outward Motive or Intereſt to make it taking. For did the Apoſtles and firſt Diſciples of our Saviour, turn Chriſtians upon any temporal Proſpect? Or what Advantage could thoſe who ſucceeded them, for the two firſt Centuries, propoſe? What could they gain by this new Profeſſion, but Diſgrace, Impriſonment and Death? And can any one be a Platonick lover of Shame and Pain, and court Miſery for its own ſake alone? Now theſe purer Times, nigheſt to the origin of our Religion, are thoſe which our Adverſaries ought to have enquir'd into, and level'd their Objections againſt; otherwiſe their Arguments only wound the preſent Profeſſors of Religion, many of which we own to live below the dignity of it, but

but fall far ſhort of doing any injury to Religion it ſelf.

Secondly, The *Sceptick* ought not to have an ill Opinion of Religion, becauſe many who are zealous for its *Truths*, are yet negligent of the *Morals* of it; and live after ſuch a manner, as would make a ſober *Heathen* bluſh. Firſt, becauſe the Chriſtian Religion is only a Law for our Actions, which can invite and perſwade alone, but cannot force an Obſervance. And the ill Actions of Chriſtians ought no more to be imputed to Chriſtianity it ſelf, than the Diſorders of any Perſons, who live under Civil or Municipal Laws, ought to be charg'd upon thoſe Laws. Secondly, Tho' theſe Perſons Lives are an open contradiction to Chriſtianity, yet it does not follow, but that they may be convinc'd of the Truth of it in their Minds and Underſtandings. For we may eaſily ſee, that Men are not always determin'd by the dictates of their Reaſon, but frequently by the biaſs and reliſh of their Senſes and Paſſions. Nor can we conclude, that becauſe Perſons live as if Chriſtianity was an Impoſture, that therefore they

are fully perswaded that it is so. Farther, we find that they have often Remorses and sad Reflections on their Actions, which can only rise in Minds satisfy'd of the Truth of that, against which they practise. For only the fear of being call'd to Account *hereafter*, can make us sorrowful and amaz'd for having done amiss *here*, under temporal Impunity. Thirdly, *Morality, Philosophy*, and the noblest Institutions which ever were, lie under the same blemish with Christianity. For the Lives of their Professors have seldom answer'd their refin'd Rules. And it is scarce possible that they should do so, till Man is subtiliz'd into a pure Spirit, and rescued from those Passions and Inclinations, which at present checquer and discolour our Natures. As to the Zeal of these Persons, it is false and counterfeited, if their Actions are not conformed to their great Pretensions.

Thirdly, 'Tis no just Objection against Christianity, That several Professors of it, embrace it not out of Reason or Conviction, but out of a supine Credulity, and walk blindly on in the Christian Religion, only because it is

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the Worſhip of their Country. For the Chriſtian Religion does not demand any ſuch credulous Temper of Mind from its Profeſſors. All that it requires is, an Underſtanding free from Prejudice, and which is ready to pay attention to Reaſon. Our Saviour at the Eſtabliſhment of this Religion, did not deſire to be believ'd on his own Teſtimony: *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf*, ſays he, *my witneſs is not true*. He appeals to his Miracles, as the moſt glorious Credentials of his Celeſtial Miſſion; for *the Works which the Father* had *given* him *to finiſh*, *the ſame Works that he* did *bore witneſs of* him, *that the Father* had ſent him. Theſe Miracles he propoſes to the Examination of the Spectators, and if they could diſcover any Impoſture in them, that they were perform'd by the power of Nature, or of Magick, (as was * afterwards urg'd,) then he refus'd to be believ'd. He does not fix the guilt of Unbelief purely in the *Jews* rejecting his Religion, but in refuſing to pay an Aſſent to it, after that it was made ſuitable to Reaſon, prov'd out of the Prophecies of the *Old Teſtament*, ſupported by Miracles greater

* *Celſus* apud *Origen.* p. 140. [illegible] [illegible] Chriſtum] [illegible] [illegible] ab Ægypto] [illegible]

than every thing, but their Infidelity. *If I had not done among them Works which none other man did, they had not had ſin; but now have they both ſeen and hated me and my Father.* As our Saviour, ſo his Apoſtles addreſt to the *Reaſons* of their Followers, in order to excite their *Faiths*. Thus St. *Paul: Prove all things; hold faſt that which is good.* And that Apoſtle, which our Saviour lov'd after a moſt paſſionate manner, adviſes the Church, *Not to believe every Spirit, but to try the Spirits, whether they are of God.* So that the Chriſtian Faith does not conſiſt in an implicit Credulity, and blind Aſſent; but in a well-founded and rational Belief, ariſing from juſt Information, and exact Reaſoning on Things. The *ſaving* Principles of Religion indeed are few, and lie in a ſmall Compaſs, though not within ſo little Bounds as the Author of *The Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, and * Mr. *Hobbes* contend for. And tho' every one ought to give the true Reaſons for his Belief, yet the *Saving Truths* of Religion in many illiterate Perſons, if attended with a Moral Life, Humility of Spirit, and Fervency of Devotion, may be as acceptable

* *Hobbes de Civ. Relig. p. 386. &c. par 6. &c. Dico autem, alium Articulum Fidei præter hunc* JESUM ESSE CHRISTUM *homini Chriſtiano,*

ceptable to God, as in the moſt eminent Critick in Theological Matters, who can give the niceſt Reſolution for every thing relating to them. Yet notwithſtanding this, every one is oblig'd (as far as lies in his power) to examin and try the Articles of his Religion; and to be a Chriſtian, not by Education, Cuſtom or Example, but by Reaſon and Conviction. So far is Religion (that is, the Reform'd Religion, ſuch as was taught by our Saviour and his Apoſtles) from encouraging a ſupine Credulity, or blind Belief. *in neceſſarium ad ſalutem, requiri nullum, &c.*

Nor is the *Sceptick*'s Fourth Objection valid, That Chriſtianity has been propagated by God only in a ſmall part of the World; and even where it has been promulg'd, it is found but an indifferent Expedient to work any ſuch extraordinary Effects on Men's Minds, as might be expected from a Religion, which God himſelf came down from Heaven to preach, and to ſeal with his Blood.

As to the firſt part, That Chriſtianity is only known to a ſmall part of the World; it may be reply'd: Firſt, That tho' God has been graciouſly pleas'd to

promiſe, that he will by his good Providence ſo order things, that *the ſound of the Goſpel* ſhall be *heard* in the *uttermoſt parts* of the Earth; yet has he not limited the Time when it ſhall thus be univerſally promulg'd. Secondly, That it is the fault, in ſome meaſure, of Chriſtians themſelves, why their Religion is not diffus'd among the unconverted Nations; becauſe Voyages to theſe barbarous Climes, are only undertaken upon Motives of Intereſt, or Proſpects of Commerce, without any deſign to promote the Truths of Religion. Thirdly, The Chriſtian Religion has been communicated to almoſt all the Civiliz'd World. Moſt of the Territories of the four famous Empires have had the Goſpel preach'd amongſt them, beſides other Parts more lately diſcover'd. While good Morals and Humanity, while Humility, Chaſtity, Honour and Probity flouriſh'd; ſo long the Chriſtian Religion continued: but when theſe were defac'd by Violence, Ambition, Pride, Luſt and Ill-nature, it was time for Religion to take her flight up to Heaven, or to ſome more hoſpitable Regions upon Earth. For how could

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ſhe ſubſiſt, when her foundation (Morality) was remov'd? Fourthly, As to thoſe places where the Chriſtian Religion has not been heard of, God will deal with them as a God of Mercy. He who lives up to the Light of his own Reaſon, up to a true Sence of the Dignity of his own Nature, and is a kind of a pure *Evangelick Deiſt*, (if I may ſo call him) may have our Saviour's Merits, which he never heard of, ſo far imputed to him, as to free him from a ſtate of Miſery. And how and by what Means God may make him happy, is an Enquiry over-curious, and concerning which our preſent Condition will not allow us to be ſatisfy'd. A future State is (in ſome proportion) to us, what *America* was to our Fore-fathers. And I, with all poſſible ſubmiſſion, think that the *Hypotheſis* of an † admirable Perſon of our Church is too bold, where he ſeems more than to intimate, that God *may extend the Tryal and Probation* of theſe Heathens *beyond this Life, and diſcover in the other Life, the Light of the Goſpel, to ſo many of them at leaſt, as have made any tolerable Improvements under the Light of Nature; and if they make good*

† Dr. *Scott's Chriſt. Life.* Part 2. Ch. 4. Sect. 1. p. 235.

uſe of it, reward them accordingly. That God will act, not only juſtly on their own accounts, but alſo (in ſome degree) mercifully on our Saviour's, by theſe Nations, ſeems an evident Truth. But *how*, or *by what way*, is more than even this thoughtful Perſon ever knew.

As to the ſecond part of the Objection, That even where Chriſtianity has been promulg'd, it is found but an indifferent Expedient, to work any extraordinary Effect on Men's Minds; it may be anſwer'd, That it is purely Satyr and Invective, and is plainly void of Truth. For tho' it muſt be with confuſion own'd, that many Chriſtians are guilty of Vices, which would make an ingenuous Heathen bluſh; yet the Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity has given a total defeat to many National and Publick Crimes. Amongſt many Civiliz'd Nations (as is plain from their own Poets and Hiſtorians,) Parents might expoſe their Children, and Maſters murder their Slaves, with Impunity, and without any dread of being call'd in queſtion. Thoſe unnatural Sins condemn'd by the Apoſtle in the firſt Chap. to the *Romans*, were parts of their Religious

ligious Worſhip; a fit Service for ſuch Gods. Men were condemn'd to maſſacre one another in their *Amphitheatres*; were engag'd againſt Beaſts, or with Men as cruel. Altars were ſtain'd with human Blood; a greater Villany than any it was deſign'd to expiate. A Hero never dy'd, but that he had pompous Trains of Slaves to attend him to their fancy'd *Elyſium*. But now all theſe barbarous Practices were as much baniſh'd by Chriſtianity, as the Idolatrous Rites of the *Zabii*, by the * *Jewiſh* Ceremonies; a ſufficient Indication, that Chriſtianity has been highly profitable to the World.

* v. Maimonides *Mor. Nev.* p. 3. c. 29. And Dr. *Spencer de Leg. Heb.* p. 177. cap. 9. l. 1. &c.

Fifthly, The Diviſions among ſingle Chriſtians, and the Wars and Diſcords between Chriſtian Princes and Commonwealths, often heighten'd by Religious Controverſies, and inflam'd by the violent Harangues of *Eccleſiaſtick* Perſons, and *the Cauſe of Religion being defended by the Dint of Calumny*, as a late † Author phraſes it, are no juſt Prejudices againſt Chriſtianity; nor do they give a Moral *Deiſt* an advantage over a Zealot for it.

† J. T's Amyntor, p. 52.

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We cannot deny, but Chriſtianity ill underſtood, has been the innocent Author of publick Diviſions, and private Diſcords; the moſt beautiful Parent of ill-reſembling Children. The Goſpel has arm'd Nations to their own ruin, and the Pulpit has given the ſignal for very unnatural Wars. Notwithſtanding this, Religion it ſelf ought not to be blam'd. For, firſt, The Founder of this Religion predicted that ſuch a diſmal Event ſhould attend his Inſtitution. *Think not, that I am come to ſend Peace on Earth: I came not to ſend Peace, but a Sword.* Secondly, It was not the deſign of Chriſtianity, to cheriſh Factions and Diſcords amongſt its Followers. Nothing could be a greater encourager of *Candor*, *Good-nature*, *Peace* and *Mutual Forbearance*, than this Religion juſtly practic'd; and all the Calamities incident to human Life, are, in a great meaſure, the Products of *Irreligion* and *Scepticiſm*. For if every Perſon liv'd up to the height of his Religion, all Wars and Conteſts would quickly ceaſe; all Paſſions be compos'd, and the Seat of the ancient *Paradiſe* would not need to be farther enquir'd into, when all the

World

World was One. These Objections, which I have endeavour'd transiently to answer, are some of the *pretended* Reasons for *Scepticism*, and Doubts about Religion. I shall proceed,

Secondly, To take a short Survey of the *true* Reasons and Motives which make Men *Scepticks*.

And the first is *Pride*. For the Truths of Religion, as they are design'd for the Salvation of all Men, so are they in some sort, adapted to the Apprehensions of all. But there are several of such sublime and exalted Thoughts, that they can relish nothing, but what is plac'd out of the vulgar method of Thinking. Thus the Emperor *Julian*, tho' adorn'd with Temperance, Gravity, Chastity and Sobriety, as appears from his own * Writings, (nor do his Adversaries, *Cyril* or *Nazianzen*, deny it;) yet the nicety and sublimity of his admir'd Philosophy, made him too *proud* to debase his Understanding, as he fancy'd, to the Lowliness of the Christian Faith. Out of this Principle a late † Writer has excluded all Mysteries out of Religion, and nothing now must

* ὑδὲ ἐπιτρέπω πολλῶν ἐπιπόμπλασθαι σιτίων. &c. v. *Juliani Misopog* p. 320. *Edit. Spanhem.*

† *To'and's* Christianity not Mysterious.

muſt be believ'd, but what can be comprehended.

The ſecond *true* Cauſe of *Scepticiſm* is *Prejudice*, or a raſh Judgment made upon Religion. For not only the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, but ſome who have been initiated into Chriſtianity, frame falſe Idea's of it. They are too much *prejudic'd* to believe, that God will puniſh Crimes of finite duration with infinite Pain. They fancy that there is reaſon to hope, that he may releaſe his Threats, and ſome way mitigate the Penalty: that it is a ſervile and mercenary Motive to engage us to Obedience, by addreſſing to our Fears, by propoſing Proſpects of eternal Miſery. But theſe Objections riſing from *Prejudice*, would be eaſily remov'd, if the *Sceptick* would conſider, that God does not puniſh Men for Sins which they could not avoid; not for ſingle Acts, but inveterate Habits, and final Obſtinacy. That Repentance, if ſincere, takes off the greateſt Guilt. That he gives us Grace to ſhun Sin, and Grace to repent of it. That Hope and Fear are the fitteſt Paſſions, by which a reaſonable Creature may be acted upon. That every

Sin

Sin is againſt infinite Majeſty, an Act too of our own Choice. That God would be wanting, in promoting the Obſervance of his Laws, if he did not make the greateſt Puniſhment due to the Violation of them. That he promiſes eternal Happineſs to Obedience, as well as threatens everlaſting Miſery upon Diſobedience.

The third *true* Cauſe of *Scepticiſm*, is a *Diſpoſition of Heart* contrary to Religion. For a Soul ſtain'd with Vice can never comply with the Truths of Religion. The Will and Affections muſt firſt be purify'd, before the Underſtanding can be enlightned. Hence our Saviour endeavours to plant the Innocence even of Children in the Minds of his Followers, before he propoſes the great Myſteries of Religion. Happy are they who have preſerv'd their Innocence unſtain'd, and whoſe Soul has never loſt its native Candour. The firſt propoſals of Religion will ſtrike upon ſuch Minds as theſe, with the moſt vigorous Light, and will convince them, as ſoon as addreſt to them. But to Spirits ſunk into a ſtate of Sin, Religion appears upon a diſadvantage, and like an Ob-

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ject striking upon a disorder'd Organ, forms an irregular Impression. Let the Wings of the Soul once be disengag'd from the *weight* of Sin, as the *Pythagoreans* (as well as Scripture) neatly stile it, and it will fly up to *Truth* and *Goodness*, as to its proper Center.

The fourth Cause of *Scepticism*, is the *prevailing Humour* of *turning every thing into Ridicule*. Nor are sacred Things themselves exempted; which takes off that Veneration which is due to them, and makes them look first contemptible, and afterwards false.

The fifth *true* Cause of *Scepticism*, (and the last which I shall mention,) is *want of Consideration* or *Attention*. For if Men either think not at all, or not regularly, or employ their Thoughts in other curious Speculations, they will of necessity continue *Scepticks*. But the fault is in themselves, not in Religion: they can no more complain of Obscurity in that, than those who have wilfully clos'd their own Eyes, of want of Light in the Heavenly Luminaries.

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Let the *Sceptick* take away these *true Causes* of *Scepticism*, and the *pretended* ones will vanish of their own accord. But while these remain, they are like to continue *Sceptick*s, till the Punishments of a future State shall not only make them *understand*, but even *feel* that Religion is True.

FINIS.